Encounter

September 1974 35p

Present dangers of racial strife

Jonathan Power

THE NEW PROLETARIAT

Robert Graves
5 Poems
Alexander Theroux
Story

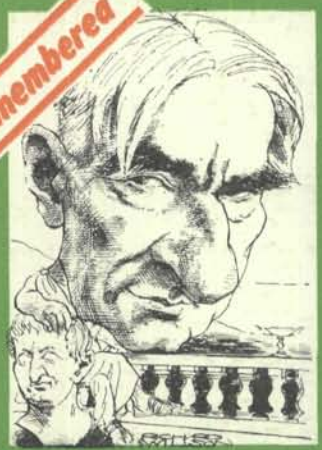
Golo Mann
Anthony Thwaite
Roy Fuller
E J Mishan

P N Furbank
Arnold Bennett
John Weightman
Stoppard & Shaw

Reconsidered

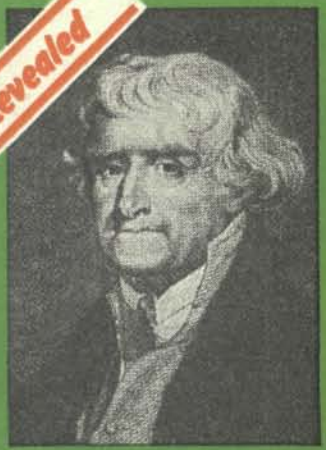
J J Rousseau
Robert Nisbet

Remembered



Norman Douglas
Constantine FitzGibbon

Revealed



Tom Jefferson
Max Beloff

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our dining room above the clouds.

'Ladies and gentlemen, dinner is served!'

Only Pan Am can offer First Class passengers the unique pleasure of enjoying the cuisine in a superb 747 dining room. We offer, at no extra cost, the relaxation of a change of seat at mealtimes, an excellent menu and a choice of wines. Our daily choice of 4 specialities usually includes **Côte de Boeuf Rôtie à l'anglaise,** cooked on board and carved at your table.

Haute cuisine has never been higher, and you'll welcome the friendly service.

As with all top restaurants it's essential to reserve a table and you should do this when booking your First Class seat. You'll quickly discover there is no finer way of travelling the world. Consult your Travel Agent today – or call us direct on 01-734 7292, day or night.

The world's most experienced airline.

PAN AM

Birmingham 021-236 9561/2/3. Glasgow 041-248 5744. Manchester 061-832 7626.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Encounter

SEPTEMBER 1974

VOL. XLIII NO. 3

Edited by MELVIN J. LASKY *and* ANTHONY THWAITE
MANAGING EDITOR: *Margot Walmsley.* ASSISTANT EDITOR: *Bryan Healing.*
GENERAL MANAGER: *Anthony Robinson.* ADVERTISEMENT MANAGER: *John Hall.*
ADVISORY BOARD: *Maurice Cranston, D. J. Enright, Anthony Hartley, Leo Labedz, Goronwy Rees, Edward Shils, John Weightman.*
PUBLISHING ADVISERS: *Lord Ardwick, Blouke Carus (Chairman), Sir Hugh Cudlipp, Cecil Harmsworth King, Leon Levy, Jack Watmough.*
Published monthly by Encounter Ltd. (in association with the Open Court Publishing Co.).
Per copy: UK 35p: USA & Canada $1.25: Back numbers 50p ($1.50).
Annual subscription: UK £4: USA & Canada $14 (by air $15.50): Elsewhere £4.95.
Address for all Departments: Encounter Ltd., 59 St Martin's Lane London WC2N 4JS (01-836 4194).
US news-stand distribution by Gordon & Gotch (USA) Inc. P.O. Box 1425, Long Island City, N.Y. 11101.
Authorised as Second-class mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa, and for payment of postage in cash.
Second-class postage paid at New York, N.Y. © *1974 by Encounter Ltd.*
Manuscripts are only returned if accompanied by s.a.e. (English stamp or International Reply Coupons).

SCUGNIZZO'S PASTA CO. *(story)* 3 *Alexander Theroux*

THE NEW PROLETARIAT 8 *Jonathan Power*

NORMAN DOUGLAS 23 *Constantine FitzGibbon*

MEN & IDEAS

ROUSSEAU & EQUALITY 40 *Robert Nisbet*

AMERICAN CHRONICLE

A "FOUNDING FATHER" 52 *Max Beloff*

THEATRE

ART VERSUS LIFE 57 *John Weightman*

POETRY

John Mole 7, *Robert Graves* 38, *Anthony Thwaite* 39, *John Matthias* 51, *David Rokeah, David Day* 87, *Peter Porter* 91

NOTES & TOPICS

DEATH OF A NIGHTINGALE 60 *Friedhelm Kemna*

LAST THOUGHTS ON "THE GENERATION GAP" 62 *Golo Mann*

BOOKS & WRITERS

ARNOLD BENNETT 67 *P. N. Furbank*

TWO MARXISTS 71 *Laurence Lerner*

KEITH DOUGLAS 75 *Roy Fuller*

LETTERS OF EDWIN MUIR 79 *Janet Adam Smith*

RECENT POETRY 82 *Douglas Dunn*

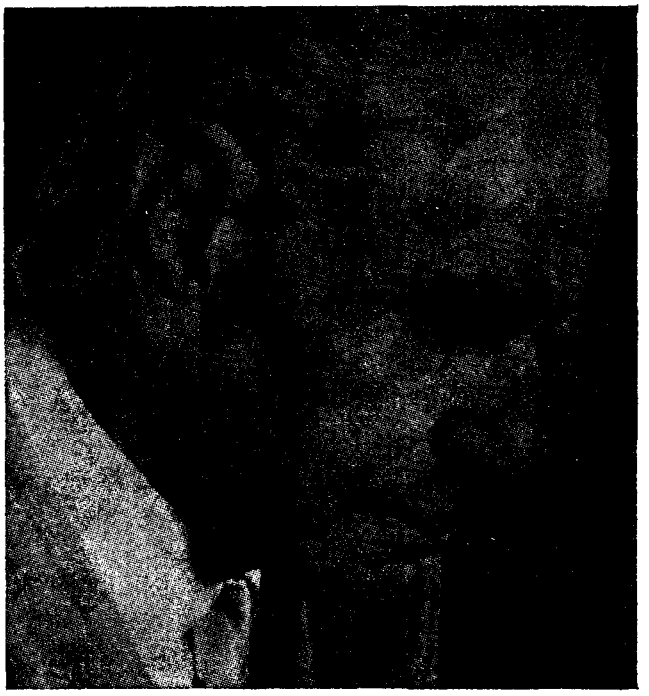
AUTHORS & CRITICS

THE NEW INFLATION 88 *E. J. Mishan*

LETTERS 92

AUTHORS 96

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



"... there is no philosopher writing in English who can match Karl Popper in range or in the quality of his work... politics, science, art... in fact few broad areas of human thought remain unillumined by Popper's work; while in technical controversies now going on simultaneously in sociology, probability theory, the interpretation of the pre-Socratic philosophers of Ancient Greece, and quantum physics, he is an important figure."

Bryan Magee *Sunday Times*

Sir Karl Popper, founder of the London School of Economics tradition of critical philosophy, is Britain's most distinguished living philosopher.

The Library of Living Philosophers is proud to add to its series the two-volume work:

The Philosophy of KARL POPPER

These volumes contain:

Popper's intellectual autobiography;

Critiques of his work by 35 notable scholars (including A. J. Ayer, Peter Medawar, E. H. Gombrich, H. B. Acton, Peter Winch, W. V. Quine, J. Bronowski, Thomas S. Kuhn);

Popper's reply to his critics (including his examination of his own legend);

Complete bibliography of Popper's writings.

Edited by **Paul A. Schlipp**

Two Volumes **1,500 pages** **£15.00**

Alcove Press

59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS

Tel: 01-836 4194

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Alexander Theroux

Scugnizzo's Pasta Co.

I AM A WOMAN. I stand for no nonsense, never have, haven't the time for it. I edit the gourmet magazine, *Hotcupboard.* You recognise? Doubtless—the not overwhelmingly specific requirement here being, probably, (a) that you aren't a man and (b) that you know the galley-ship the kitchen once was (though, our whole tack, needn't be), having felt like we and others the depressing simplex—but for the "liberation" at hand, otherwise tragic—of brasspots, soiled eggcups, marmite spoons, and filthy cylindrical moulds.

Agreed, sisters? I hear you.

Hotcupboard is our magazine. No less is its role as forum, catch-all, voice-box of the harangued. We think of it, frankly, as not only tunefully current with but frightfully aware of the needs of the American woman, any cross-section of whom, of those on any day flashing through magazines, could be spied with a copy of H.C.B. at the ready and scissoring out one of our scrumptious recipes; boxing a household hint; recording the new versatility of an herb; or simply, time permitting—because ours in America, but for the periodic lift magazines of this type give, is hardly a life of leisureful or spoon-licking la-de-da—pausing rapturously over our mouth-watering ektachromes (by which we monthly enrich our issues) of, well, crisp buttered broccolis, smoking barmbrack, skewered pieces of charcoaled steak, and hot bowls of conch gumbo. It's a woman's magazine, theoretically not to exclude the male, but there is to be found upon closer inspection an undelineated though paradoxically observable line drawn around us, our work, and our thought over which, for my money, men in general need never step.

We have one male with us in the New York offices. He's a janitor.

One needn't suppose I mention men idly. I will momentarily introduce and (gainsaying a discreet resolve I made some years ago) even discuss an Italian person named Scugnizzo, archetypal male the mere memory of whom gives me the fantods and who has more than once forced me angrily to abrupt cold showers and salving ice-packs. But I'm getting ahead of myself. Let's to the airport and a crossed ocean.

PISTICCI, Italy. Who knows of it? Few, I'll wager.

Thither, however, had I come—you can't believe the risk, by the way, of a busride alone at night out of slatternly Naples and its blanket of stale sudiferous air—to research an article for an Italian number we were doing. My focus was to have been in the area of *pasta.* Its A, its Z. How often, it one day occurred to us sitting around the offices in New York, had our patient readers, female predominantly (exclusively, no, we can't be certain) been shunted hither and yon during the process—ignorant of what it quintessentially was—of ritually preparing *pasta*: cooking it, straining it, folding it, twisting it, crumbing it, be-saucing it, and, say, shoving minced cheeses and/or meats through it? Or even, bless such who do, making it from scratch? Well, *Hotcupboard* got on the subject right away. American women would soon have the full dope on it, if I had my way. May I add I usually do?

The reader—may we a minute pause?—will perhaps recall the biennial "special numbers" of our magazine, over which for

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

just about every copy, rumoured near-priceless the very day of printing, people fought each other right in the open? For instance, there was our first special, on Bombes (as of a month ago a collector's item); there was our number on Winged Game, seminally crucial, that one, to the basic knowledge of it. There was the one on The Gourd Family, and the photographs alone from that issue have since become legend. The special on Frostings brought letters from as far away as Lapland, as did the devilish little one we ran on Meals To Be Eaten Only By Hand, a big hit, that one, in the South. Let's see now, we ran them—I hope this list is complete—on Chowders; Asian *Hors D'oeuvres*; Biscuits (everything from pull-aparts to bran); and, our most remarkable I guess, the special we did entirely on the Camel, whose hump, feet, and stomach by the way are very much appreciated by connoisseurs. A strictly fruitarian issue people are begging us for. Someday, maybe.

But *pasta*? Well, hell, this was something we knew everything about but what it was!

PASTA FACTORIES, though history credits the invention of macaroni, spaghetti, and similar "pastes" to the Chinese, are best found in Southern Italy and in Sicily, especially in areas of hard wheat cultivation. As I said, I stand for no nonsense, never have. I wear hard brown shoes. Well, let me tell you about it. I secured for *Hotcupboard* and her subscribers the perfect "paste" factory imaginable, set up high in the small sienna-coloured hills outside rude and rural Pisticci, demanded a tour and a few days' inspection, and then—my wet nails drying in the warm breezes that blew far inland across the fabled Bay—I efficiently telegrammed New York from my pensione: HOLD FOR DUCKY PIECE ON FARINACEOUS. SEND PHOTOGRAPHER. PISTICCI WOPPISH AND SWELTERING. MUST RUN.

IT WAS MORNING at Scugnizzo's Pasta Factory.

"Semolina," yelled the proprietor.

I wrinkled my nose against the dust and noise, and nodded.

"You like?" he howled again and his grinning mouth widened and opened like a nutcracker under that gigantic beak of a nose, like Punch. He was cross-eyed and all hands. He wore a pigskin hat, which made him look like the "bedlam" in a medieval English play.

"Rather," said I. You don't want to give yourself away. "Rather." I scooped up and weighed several handfuls from only one of the fat wooden barrels filled with this hard glutinous wheat (known, generally, as durum or macaroni in the States), and the barrels surrounded us in a phalanx, in the middle of which, it had just then come to me, we alone were standing—an occasion Scugnizzo found propitious enough for a sudden inquiry: had I a *fidanzato*? I was flabbergasted. He stood there, smiling, stroking the huge length of his nose with two fingers. I ignored him and exaggeratedly smelled a fistful of semolina. I felt the nap of it—and made a note. More questions obtruded: had I a car, my hotel a bed, my heart a void, and the sky a moon? Irked I suddenly just stood against him put my hands to my hips, and hissed. He mooed and sidled off, crestfallen. I could tell by the back of his head when he took off his hat. It tightened.

At the far end of the company's one long room stood about four or five weirdly angular and unrecognisable machines, chuffing away. I peered at them for about five minutes, trying as best I could to divert my attention from romantic Cagliostro who, not ten feet from me, I suddenly noticed, was micturating through the doorway on to some tomato plants and whistling snatches of "*Mamma, quel vino è generoso*" from—I thought it suitable—*Cavalleria Rusticana*. He finished dramatically, how shall I say?—with, well, gestures. I had a real one on my hands.

"Gum." He flicked his head.

I frankly couldn't tell if he was looking at me or not.

Asked to come (he *was* looking at me, O joy), I followed—the alternative, in point of fact, not really mine in that, my fretfully unwilling hand in Scugnizzo's effortful grip, I had been haled along at an enjoyable skip over the floured planks to a guillotine-type machine (a large round drum instead of a blade), roaring, whistling steam, and spitting out droplets of hot water from around its moonscape of pressure gauges and meters.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"*Il nostro bambino!*" exclaimed Scugnizzo, poised and beaming before the machine, the plate of his face a mere inch from mine and showing that maniacal sense of pep and proximity we associate with the excited but simultaneously troubled in eye. He tapped the metal sides of the machine lovingly, then reached down and—I swear to God—he goosed it! He winked and cacked at me with inner-drawn snorts, indicative, one perhaps rashly assumed, of his having done something witty. And indeed this was probably wit for the Italian. And the male. The combination *is* disastrous. Then Scugnizzo began fondling some pipes, brainlessly assuming the American woman incapable of seeing—and immediately—linked analogies, the damned fool. I sought a displacement activity.

"What is—" I reached up high and tapped the drum, "—that?"

"Ah yes, Mrs.," he pronounced. "This is called the '*trafila.*' " Scugnizzo turned me to him (and to those juggernaut eyes) by the wrist and, jaw extended, he tried to be helpful by tripping out for my educational benefit the demonstrationally overstressed dental/labial/dental: "*Tra. Fi. La.*"

I repeated it aloud, accurately I might add.

He shook his head, the prig. "*Traaa. Feeee. Laaaa,*" repeated Scugnizzo and moved closer. I repeated it quickly to avoid, I said to myself, the nearness of you.

Well, anyway, it was then explained—and my article fleshed out—that boiling water in very small amounts moistened the semolina, which was then worked up into a powerful machine kneader. The finished dough goes into the drum of a press, where the *pasta*—compressed tremendously by revolving screws—is squeezed slowly out of the base of the drum through the small holes of the perforated plate called, I more than knew, the *trafila.* It exudes like beautiful golden hair. The pot was already gravid with fattening dough, and Scugnizzo, while ostentatiously singing "*La Donna è Nubile*" (a joke, preempting his, he rather stupidly wasn't aware my three years of Italian also afforded me), shoved into the bottom of the drum one of the many *trafila*-forms, which, by the way, fix the shape of whatever variety of macaroni or any pasta one wishes.

SEMOLINAS ARE MULTIFORM. For instance, there were "pipes," "solids," and "ribbons." There was in each hole a steel pin which give the macaronis their hollow, tubular form; the "solids," using smaller holes and no pin, yield spaghettis; and for flat, noodle-like ribbon varieties a flat opening takes the place of a round hole. The roar was incredible. Scugnizzo killed the machine, nipped a piece from the oozing *zitoni* there, closed his eyes, and smacked his lips, saying, "*Troppo dolce.*"

Then he burped.

He gave me none of the snip to taste, such is the Italian cavalier and, I suspect, most men. So I myself then yanked out of one of the holes a little wet wad and dropped it into my mouth. But Italian manners? There's a topic.

"This you like, Mrs.?"

He was looking at the machine. No, he was looking at *me.*

"It seems very efficient," said I, lying. What the whole thing was, you see, was only some queer frugalistic noodle-house in someone's backyard looping out comic little *pastas* as slow as a wet week only to be overseasoned and twisted around in local and surely indiscriminate platters. But, what the deuce, it had colour and was magazine-worthy. And if in fact the dough here was humming with mites and animalcules, well, that was more Pisticci's business than mine, thank you very much.

"Is peautiful, yes?"

God, the Italian was such a—! "Yes, Mr Scugnizzo," said I, rolling eyeballs skyward and sighing, "it's beautiful. All right?"

"*Romantico.*"

Romantic was hardly my word, as you could perhaps imagine, for the machine.

"Eh?"

"*Romantico,*" repeated Scugnizzo.

"Why I—"

But he had his cap slipped off and was with his hand nervously combing back thick pomaded shocks of hair. He raised his eyebrows and looked at me (I surmised) puppy-like. His throatball bounced. He grabbed my arm.

"You give me boogie-woogie?"

My God, I thought, he hadn't been pointing to or talking about the machine or the factory. He had been talking all along

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

about *himself*. Well, I stand for no nonsense, believe thee me. I marched away, notebook in hand—along with, should I have pointed this out to him, a *sharpened* pencil?—to the drying rooms. I watched him further humiliate himself by clutching his hands at a semi-squat and blubbering things like, "*Far l'amore?*" and "I am good, beautiful, yes, no?" Funny, down on 42nd St. I'd have viced somebody like that in the privates without a qualm. As it was, I simply pitied the poor thing.

IT WAS PATHETIC, really, wasn't it? Here I was in the last outpost of Pisticci on a sweltering day and there finding myself being bargained for like some market sow by a swivel-eyed noodlemaker and his uncomplicatedly common face. Naples proper would have been no different, of course. I know the score. I knew what in Naples one could expect in the way of male Italian promenaders: of being trailed into caves on the Herculaneum/Pompeii circuit; of being sized-up and pinched blue in the (I think) intentionally less-than-well-lit Galleria Umberto Primo; of being sent into abrupt shock by fat, jaunty middle-aged tenors who come suddenly bulging out of dark Neapolitan alleys in silk open shirts singing through their wet lips, "*Maria, Mari.*" But, I mean, in rustic Pisticci?

I stayed on briefly, the time it took the recently arrived photographer to take a suitable number of pictures. He summarily departed, with me to follow in a day.

MY FINAL DAY became a *rite de passage*, one hellish. Scugnizzo tried to sugar his sourness that morning (following a night in which he had tried to blunder into my bedroom with a cracked mandolin and an incredibly presumptuous estimate of what he thought was to happen there) by gallantly opening the factory door and accompanying this with a low, non-ironic bow from the waist, this last a *bella figura* I beautifully snubbed, walking past him, as I did, breezily —and with one arched eyebrow. We went, that morning, to the company yards. I finally got the information I wanted on the drying process, which, in sunny Italy, it turns out, is done by simple outdoor exposure. The *pastas*, I saw, looking out at what seemed an orchard of looms, were draped over canes or frames and there dried, sorted, inspected, weighed, and packed.

"*E bellissima*, no?" asked full-of-himself Scugnizzo, surveying in a martial walk as if through his camp, the row upon row of limp *pastas*—crackable if too cool, souring if too hot, mildewed if too moist—drying under the warm italianate sun: short flat *lasagnes*; thinly threaded *fidellini*; healthily ribbed *rigatonis*; curled *vermicellis*; exotically cut *bombollotis*; and all the *foratinis*, *linguines*, *mezzanellis*, and on and on past a hundred and more. It sounded like the roll-call of good Roman society during the Silver Age. I scratched away at my notebook. I looked around for Scugnizzo who had suddenly disappeared.

Once again inside, I blinked at the cool darkness of the shed, relaxed until Scugnizzo (with his infantile humour) pivoted from behind the back of the door and—urgent, perspiring—lickerishly whispered:

"I want to make you habby, Mrs."

"Uh-uh."

"Blease, I am young and good. I have dirty years old."

Catching me just on the brink of my indignant run to higher authority, Scugnizzo, crushed, generously but nervously began quickly bagging me some samples of tinted *pastas* right there under my nose, a coloured medley of greens, yellows, and reds (respectively from spinach juice, eggs, and beets) and then he parcelled out some of the more artistically cut and styled variety: alphabets, stars, dots, crescents. I saw, thanks to his eyes, he spilled scoopfuls.

I saw, further, that I more or less had what I needed to do my piece and wanted to be off. (Actually, I had been packed for two days.) Scugnizzo's lengthily pondered farewell *auguri* he thievishly tried to transmogrify into a kiss, but, lurching at me—close enough at least to reaffirm, I grimaced, the one absolute in the world: the Italian abuse of garlic—he found himself quickly fumbled, if that shriek wasn't faked, by guarded me and a handbag swung more or less successfully at the extremities. I can't stand nonsense.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A FEW MONTHS LATER, *Hotcupboard* ran its already-by-now-coveted Italian number, snapped up by girls all across the country and certainly fulfilling all our own expectations, not only in the tantalising wine and food area but also with its *complément formidable* of the lush colour shots of Naples and environs, its wheatfields, the Praxiteles' Knido Venus, the fountains, nets with their seacatch—the *only* exception, alas, a photograph printed in the "pasta" section, sad only because so beautifully written, of a machine, me, and a man with dislocated eyes in a pigskin cap at my right. The man appears to be looking and earnestly gesturing towards the machine. No, I mean, the man—anybody'd vouch for it—is *definitely* looking and earnestly gesturing towards the machine. A damfool janitor here, until I fired him, disagreed.

Telling the Bees

The woman bee-keeper, probably photographed around 1900 *or a little earlier, is "telling the bees"; that is to say, she is engaged in the long-accepted practice of keeping her bees informed of her domestic affairs. She is holding a key in her right hand, as part of the ritual.*
(*Gordon Winter:* A COUNTRY CAMERA)

1

She sets each jar
in place for counting;

mellow sunlight
presses on the glass.

A swarm collects
and bristles, then

its fearsome beard
is gathered in her skep.

2

Hived, the bees
are dutiful.

Her simple patterns
regulate their day

or not so simple—
"Do I love him?"

Let the bright key
glitter in her hand.

3

Their wings dismiss
the buzz of gossip—

that's for flies
and little birds—

to bunch together
intimate with sweetness,

keeping secrets
in a drowsy hive.

4

At last, her honey
is apportioned;

one by one
the golden jars return.

Soon, like them,
she'll lie contented

full and glowing
quietly in the dusk.

John Mole

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jonathan Power

The New Proletariat

"This is a trap set by history. We in France and in Europe have been accustomed to colonising the world. Now the foreigners are coming here to us."
PIERRE MESSMER,
at the Council of Ministers (9 May 1973)

I'M SHAKING a little as I write this. A few minutes ago just outside my house, I saw a young West Indian man hurl an empty milk-bottle through the open window of a passing taxi. It hit the taxi driver on the back of the head. By a miracle the bottle did not break; and by a miracle the taxi driver stopped his cab without hitting any oncoming traffic. The West Indian in question happens to be a friend of mine. He explained to me that five taxis had passed by with their "free" light on and yet had refused to stop. He had been in desperate straits for his pregnant wife had telephoned him to say she had just had a miscarriage.

Two days ago I received a letter from an Algerian living in a shanty town in Paris. She is a bright ambitious girl, one of the five Algerian immigrant-descended students at the University of Nanterre, and I met her last summer when she came to London to learn English. In her letter she tells me she has had to leave and get a job book-keeping. She had turned 21 and had been told that unless she took French nationality—she has lived in France since she was five—she would no longer be eligible for a grant. But she could not, or would not. The violence that has been steadily mounting against France's 800,000 Algerians—six murdered by Frenchmen in one terrible month in Marseilles alone—had finally convinced her she could never be French. Yet to me, she is in dress, mannerisms, aspirations more French than Algerian.

There are 10 million immigrants[1] in Common Market Europe alone—about the same as the combined population of three member countries, Denmark, Ireland, and Luxembourg. A U.N. forecast (before the great oil crisis) predicted a total immigrant labour force of 22 million by 1980. That would be nearly half as many as emigrated from Europe to the New World in the great 19th- and early 20th-century migrations. As we know those American migrations produced enormous turbulence and no little suffering. But compared to what is happening today, it was a fairly homogeneous migration. The overwhelming majority were of European stock and of Judaeo-Christian religious culture. Now we have Turks, Moroccans, Jamaicans, Algerians, Pakistanis, Surinamese, Greeks, Yugoslavs, Antilleans, South Koreans, Philippinos—moving into the bottom rungs of a society totally different in customs and mores. Strangeness and antagonism, withdrawal and hostility, all the reciprocal responses feed on each other, and the elements of violence proliferate.

WHAT HAPPENED TO my West Indian friend is an everyday event. It is hardly worth a mention—unless you actually see it happen. But the anti-Turkish riots in Rotterdam in 1972 shook a society that thought—because of its successful experience in integrating 300,000 Indonesians in the 1950s—that it knew how to conquer racism. And the shocking holocaust in Marseilles last year laid the myth that France was the civilised non-racist society of Europe where Africans became Cabinet Ministers and no one really noticed.

Opinion polls in all the European countries confirm the mounting displeasure with the foreigners in our midst. That they are here to do the jobs Europeans no longer want to do is an article of faith held by detached intellectuals and by company personnel officers. For most Europeans they are here to take advantage of our wealth-creating system, to compete for our scarce housing, and to partake of our social services. When social reality and psychological prejudice are so far apart, and when the "culprit"

[1] Not including *intra*-EEC migrants.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is so easily identifiable and locatable, there before us is the best recipe in the sociological book for turbulence.

That the outbreaks of violence so far have been localised and relatively small is probably easily explained. First, there is the social stability of the European post-War system, strengthened in particular by the economic expansion from which most people have benefited. Secondly, immigration has helped European job mobility. The native workers have been able to move up a peg or two—they may not acknowledge why it has happened, but that does not detract from the sense of achievement. Thirdly, there has been the reluctance of first-generation newcomers "to get involved." By and large they have kept a low profile. Fourthly, and more difficult to measure, has been the patient legwork done by various social and Church agencies, trade unions, and action groups. They vary in their effectiveness from country to country. In Belgium the trade union record is quite good; in Britain it has been appalling. In Britain and Holland the community action groups are impressive, whereas in France and Germany they are much less sophisticated.

At least two of these factors are changing. The most obvious is the deep economic insecurity into which Europe has been plunged. This does not mean that Europe will suddenly decide to send all its immigrants home, profound though the consequences of that would be. No, something much more subtle and even worse could happen. The fact is that the immigrants do jobs that native Europeans would *rather be unemployed* than do. In 1967 Germany's economic growth dropped to –0.3%. Yet although immigrant recruitment dropped, some 151,900 new workers were engaged during 1967. The return flow was only very slightly larger than it would have been during boom conditions. The net decrease of about 200,000 (out of an immigrant work force of 1,300,000) was not due to the dismissal of foreign workers by employers but almost wholly the result of the fall in the number of new immigrants.

The German experience suggests that unless there is a long-lasting recession of unprecedented proportions in Europe (at least in a post-War sense) leading to major change of work habits, the vast majority of immigrants will stay.[2] And they then become easy targets for those who may need a scapegoat for society's ills. Unemployed white youths will find it all too simple to alleviate their frustrations by beating up people they never have liked. Politicians will find it all too tempting to capitalise on people's anxieties and announce that the immigrants must go. A situation of passive intolerance could pass to one of active animosity.

THE OTHER MAJOR FACTOR that is changing is the age structure of the immigrant population. And it could not, because of the likely events I have adumbrated, be happening at a worse time. Many of the migrants who came in the early 1960s now have teen-age children who have spent most of their lives in Europe. And they are not particularly thankful for having the opportunity to work in Europe rather than starve in Jamaica or Algeria. It matters only marginally whether they have a European nationality (as do Commonwealth immigrants) or they don't (as do most of the others). At bottom they feel they have a right to a job, social mobility, and respect. They're touchy, "fusey", and they can easily be set off. Put them in a tight situation and the unpredictable might happen.

The migrants who inhabit the central slums of major European cities, who drive our buses, wait on our tables, help run our hospitals, and feed our conveyor belts have been led into a situation that bodes ill for both us and them.

2. *The Pathology of People on the Move*

"The oppressed and their defenders are no longer on their own. In the wonderful adventure which lies before us, these relationships of lords and villeins have become a thing of the past. They should no longer have a place in the last third of our century."
M. PARAF, CHAIRMAN OF M.R.A.P.
"L'homme de toutes les Couleurs" (1973)

WHAT MOTIVATED migration of such enormous proportions? Should it be allowed to continue? Is there no alternative? Does it benefit *their* homeland economies as much as it does *ours*? These are the questions that any frank discussion must force us to face.

Thomas Hardy, some eighty years ago, commenting on an earlier migration (that from countryside to town) wrote:

[2] Of course the Commonwealth immigrants who arrived in Britain before 1972—and also the Surinamese and Dutch Antilleans—are in a rather unusual position in a European sense. They cannot be evicted without substantial changes in the law.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> "These families who had formed the backbone of village life in the past, who were the depositories of the village traditions, had to seek refuge in the large centres: the process humorously designated by the statisticians as the 'tendency of the rural population towards the larger towns' but being really the tendency of water to flow uphill when forced by machinery. . . ."[3]

The machinery is, of course, located in two places. At this end is our economic growth. It is capital intensive, yes; but none the less it has had a continuing tendency to overrun its traditional labour supply. Indeed, Kindleberger, the distinguished American economist, has argued[4] that the availability of additional labour supplies has been the main ingredient in sustaining growth. The plentiful supply of relatively undemanding labour, young and hardworking, has favoured a degree of economic development that would not have been possible without it. They have increased productivity by removing labour bottlenecks, and have encouraged capital investment by being more prepared to work night-shifts. They have kept wage levels from rising too fast, and at the same time have enabled European workers to move into higher skilled jobs. They have been less demanding on the social services because of their age structure, and have been prepared because of their mobility to move in and out of short-lived jobs.

The massive post-War migrations of Turks to Germany, Italians to Switzerland, Finns to Sweden, Algerians to France, Surinamese to the Netherlands, and Moroccans to Belgium have one thing in common: they are all closely correlated with economic growth in the recipient country. Speed up the economy—and they pour in. Slow it down and they begin to stop coming. Every country in Europe, bar Britain, has seen this clearly. Only the British could erect immigration barriers in a time of slow growth. Only the British could cause a panic flow to "beat the ban" that bore no relation to economic opportunities. Only the British, having got the economy on the upswing in 1973, could find growth was being threatened by massive labour shortages—trains and buses not running and motor-car factories forced to offer their staff "a free car for every dozen workers recruited." Our more sophisticated growth-successful European friends did not make these mistakes.[5]

The other part of the machinery forcing the migrant stream uphill is their poverty at home. The miseries of hardship are heightened by the widening relative gap between their towns and their countrysides, and between "Them" and "Us".

BETWEEN 1960 and 1970 the rich countries added $700 billion to their annual real incomes. This sum alone dwarfs the *total* combined annual incomes of the continents of Asia, Latin America, and Africa. The difference between us and Asia is now about $2,000 per head. On recent trends it will widen to $7,000 by the end of the century.[6]

But it is not a silent gap: it has been made vibrant and real through mass communication. The result has been an imaginary despair in the countryside and an unending pilgrimage to the towns. Unemployment in the urban areas of Africa averages 27%; in the Philippines 12%; in Bogota, Colombia 11%. In Ceylon nearly 40% of the 15-to-24-year-olds are unemployed.[7] Under-employment is even worse. In a developed economy an expanding "tertiary sector" is a sign of progress—services are the harvest of economic achievement. It is quite the reverse in Latin America, Asia, and Africa—services are parasites drawing odd coins from the casual passage of wealthier pockets. Shoe-shine boys, sellers of ticky-tacky, messengers, cigarette vendors, tourist touts, porters, all eke out a living without contributing a dime's worth to economic development. The proportion of the non-agri-

[3] Thomas Hardy, *Tess of the D'Urbervilles*, Macmillan, St Martin's Library Edition (1957), p. 395.

[4] C. P. Kindleberger, *European Post-war Growth—the Role of Labour Supply* (Harvard, 1967), p. 3.

[5] In fairness one should point out that few other European countries would have absorbed the Asian-descended refugees from East Africa (General Amin's "purge") with as little fuss as the British did in 1972.

[6] R. Jolly, *The Aid Relationship—Reflections on the Pearson Report*, House of Commons Select Committee on Overseas Aid, Session 1960–70 (HMSO, 1970), p. 133.

[7] The following table, prepared by the International Labour Organisation, suffers from the weaknesses affecting all such estimates, but illustrates the magnitude of the problem. It projects an increase of 170 million in the labour force during the decade 1970–80, with only half as great an increase in the number of full-time jobs:—

Levels of Unemployment and Underemployment in Developing Countries, excluding China

	1970	1980	1970		1980	
	Millions		%		%	
Fully employed	504	592	7·53		70·5	
Underemployed	130	200	19·4		23·8	
				24·7		29·5
Employed	634	792	94·7		94·3	
Unemployed	36	48	5·3		5·7	
Total labour force	670	840	100·0		100·0	

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

cultural labour force engaged in services in Latin American countries is between 60 and 70%; in Europe it is between 40 and 50%.[8]

Urban growth in the Third World (writes Barbara Ward) has become "pathological".[9] In 1920, 185 million people in the more developed countries lived in towns over 20,000; 80 million of these were in the big cities. For the less developed lands the figures were 68 million townsmen and only 16 million in big cities. By 1980, assuming present trends continue, cities in the Third World will have 100 million more inhabitants than the developed cities, and 70% of them will be living in the big cities.

THE EUROPEAN RELATIONSHIP between urbanisation and industrialisation has been turned on its head. Our cities, horrible as they often are, at least had an historic purpose. They grew to advance economic activity. Our cities proliferated because we learnt how to subdivide work into a myriad of tasks. And the subdivision created simultaneously increased productivity; the services financed and distributed it; and there was an ever increasing demand for labour (and the labour is still coming).

But the cities of the developing world have grown ahead of industrialisation. In 19th-century Europe the proportion of the population living in cities of over 20,000 was *always less* than the working force engaged in manufacturing.

In France in 1856, 10·7% of the population was living in the urban areas, and 29% was working in industry. In Sweden in 1890 the proportions were 10·8% and 22%. In Switzerland in 1888 even more startlingly, 45% of the labour force was already in manufacturing but a mere 13% of its people were town-dwellers.

Compare this with what is going on in today's developing world. In Tunisia in 1956, 17·5% of the people were in cities, but only 6·8% of the labour force was in industry. In Brazil in 1960, 28·1% in cities, 9·5% in industry. Although the economic growth of Venezuela has

[8] Robert McNamara, *One Hundred Countries, Two Billion People* (Praeger, 1973).

[9] "The Poor World Cities" (a special survey by Barbara Ward), *The Economist*, 6 December 1969. See also *Socio-Economic Progress in Latin America* (Inter-American Development Bank, 1968), pp. 333–377.

TABLE I
Emigration from Mediterranean countries into various countries of Western Europe (1971)

Emigration from		*Immigration to*		
	Population $\times 10^3$	*France*	*Germany*	*Benelux*
Mediterranean Europe				
Spain	33,290	589,925	270,000	73,000
Greece	8,892	10,125	395,000	16,000
Italy	53,667	588,740	590,000	205,000
Portugal	9,630	694,550	55,214	13,000
Turkey	35,232	18,325	653,000	36,000
Yugoslavia	20,527	65,220	594,000	12,000
North Africa				
Algeria	14,012	754,462	1,985	4,100
Morocco	15,525	194,296	10,921	47,000
Tunisia	5,137	106,845	9,918	2,000
Population of Mediterranean origin		3,022,488	2,580,038	408,100
Total foreign population		3,505,210	3,400,000	845,300
Total population		51,004,300	61,281,000	22,906,500

(*Annuaire des pays méditerranéens*, Publication IAM, no 6, avril 1973)

TABLE II
Immigration by Nationality, (1972)

Country where work is sought	*France*		*Germany*		*Switzerland*	
Country of origin	*Number*	%	*Number*	%	*Number*	%
Turkey	8,213	6.8	96,210	20.0	2,586	0.9
Greece	224	—	24,666	5.1	679	0.2
Yugoslavia	7,317	6.1	75,501	15.8	20,687	7.0
Italy	5,193	4.3	154,184	32.2	142,729	48.2
Spain	9,925	8.3	28,657	5.9	94,686	32.0
Portugal	30,475	25.5	16,476	3.4	5,031	1.7
EEC minus Italy	2,866	2.4	23,016	4.8	15,442	5.2
North Africa	48,793	40.8	6,000	1.2	424	0.1
Others	6,643	5.8	51,610	10.9	11,986	4.0
Total	119,649	100	479,797	100	296,223	100

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been a remarkable 10% a year, the number of unemployed at the end of a decade of fast expansion is as high as ever. Cities like Dakar, Abidjan and Accra—with populations approaching a million—have nearly half the country's population living in them! Yet a mere 5% of their population is engaged in industry. . . .

The causes of this imbalance are more complex than might first appear. It is not merely that industrialisation is in its infancy in the Third World, but it is a matter of the *kind* of industrialisation that is being introduced. Manufacturing increased at an average rate of between 6% and 7% between 1960 and 1970, faster indeed than the rate of increase in most of the now industrialised countries when they were developing. Manufacturing today accounts for 17% of the combined *G.N.P.* of the developing countries (compared with 12% twenty years ago). This surge of economic progress, however, does not spill over into the unemployment pool. Manufacturing absorbed less than one-fifth of the approximate 200 million increase in the labour force between 1950 and 1970. The annual increase in job opportunities averaged a mere 4%.

Progress is often perversely reactionary. Much of the fault lies in the imported capital-intensive technology that is used in the Third World—using techniques from advanced economies in which capital is relatively abundant and in which labour is in short supply. There are good reasons and bad reasons why this should be so.

The good reasons are that this is the only kind of machinery one can buy these days—or at least get with regular supply of spare parts and servicing. Also those projects using larger quantities of capital, it is argued, are those yielding high rates of profits to wages. And profits can be ploughed back to increase growth.

The bad list is longer. At the top of it is the "prestige factor." The feeling is rife in too many poor countries that in order to create a "modern" society they should emulate us. In Uganda, to take a not untypical example, investing firms can write off 120% of capital expenditure against tax—but there are no inducements offered to maximise employment. Foreign aid often exacerbates the process. 90% of American aid—and 48% of British—is tied. What this means is that aid must be spent on imports from the donor country. Rarely is aid allowed for local costs. So it becomes cheaper for an aid-receiving country which wants to build a road to use imported earth-moving equipment rather than to use men with picks and shovels. A third negative is that industry, instead of providing a favourable demonstration of the possibilities of development, too often undermines local initiative—E. F. Schumacher calls it "a process of mutual poisoning."

> "The establishment of modern industry in a few metropolitan areas tends to kill off competing types of traditional production throughout the countryside, thus causing widespread unemployment or under-employment. The countryside thereupon takes its revenge by mass migration into the metropolitan areas causing them to grow to a totally unmanageable size. . . .[10]

THE COUNTRYSIDE HAS BEEN neglected. Family size grows; feudal land ownership systems remain untouched despite a thousand manifestos for fundamental reforms; agricultural techniques are primitive; the markets for cash crops are unstable and fluctuating; and governments give low priority to agricultural development. Between 1920 and 1960 the Latin American work force grew by nearly 54 million. Farming, however, only offered 12 million new jobs.

Even when there is opportunity in the countryside, the young men often find the town more appealing. An adolescent is bound to earn more in a town job than he could hope to earn at home (until, perhaps, he is old enough to farm independently and by the time he has reached that age he has lost his attachment to the land). The fact is that not only will a job give them a higher income but (as Dr Caroline Hutton[11] showed in her revealing study of Kampala's unemployed) they feel that in the town they have the chance of an income that will not depend on weather or market prices and will be paid regularly week by week.

It is no wonder then that young men, unemployed, marginally employed or unsatisfactorily employed in these sprouting Third World cities, or on the land but eager to move off, should take the chance when it is offered to move onwards to our cities. Indeed an essay in the World Bank Magazine *Finance and Development*[12] illustrated the connection by pointing out that *it would cost*

[10] E. F. Schumacher, "Industrialisation through 'Intermediate Technology' ", in G. M. Meier, (ed.) *Leading Issues in Development Economics* (New York, 1970).

[11] Caroline Hutton, "Aspects of Urban Unemployment in Uganda", in *East African Institute of Social Research* Conference Papers, Jan. 1966 (Kampala), No. 358, pp. 5–7.

[12] J. M. Hume, "Migrant Workers in Europe", *Finance and Development*, vol. 10, no. 1 (March 1973), pp. 2–6.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the rich countries $60 billion in aid to create the number of jobs in the developing world equivalent to the number of immigrant workers in Europe.

But is this safety valve of emigration as beneficial as the World Bank article seems to suggest? And are there no better alternatives?

3. The Migrant Tragedy

"In hotels and bars, in Youghal, Caherciveen, Donaghadee, Tallaght, Camden Town, Inisheen, and Kilburn—in any place where our people have gathered—I have bested them all. If someone said he had been to Texas and hunted cattle, I was hot on his heels with my story of a weekend spent with a sheik in East Tunis."

BRENDAN BEHAN, *Tell Me Another.*

NO COUNTRY MORE DRAMATICALLY shows the after-effects of continuous emigration than Ireland. If one wants to see what Algeria, Turkey or Portugal might well be like in fifty years time, go to Ireland. It should become the migrant's crystal ball.

In the space of 100 years Ireland's population fell from 8 million to 4 million. The impetus behind the initial large-scale migrations was the Great Famine of 1845–49. A million people emigrated in half-a-dozen years. Emigration began as an economic need in a moment of distress, but it evolved to a point where the principal cause of emigration was—prior emigration. As the young people paid less attention to work on the land, so the old people found the work increasingly difficult, became less able to take agrarian initiatives, and less receptive to new agricultural ideas. So there seemed more reason for the next generation of young to depart.

The most important spur of all was the picture painted by those already gone. The letters from America in the 19th century, albeit written from overcrowded tenements in New York and Chicago, spoke of a glorious land. Maurice O'Sullivan wrote in *Twenty Years A-Growing* that delicate and beautiful classic of Gaelic literature, of how, when he was growing up in an Irish village,

> "I looked west at the edge of the sky where America should be lying, and I slipped back on the paths of thought. It seemed to me now that the New Island was before me with its fine streets and great high houses, some of them so tall that they scratched the sky; gold and silver out in the ditches and nothing to do but gather it. . . . I see the boys and girls who were once my companions. . . ."

A few months ago a young girl in a village in the West of Ireland told me that she was thinking of emigrating to Britain because a friend of hers just back from London for the holidays was "earning £100 a week just for moving a few bricks around for three or four hours a day. . . ." We became embroiled in a discussion.

I assured her that she was being taken in. She countered by telling me that rural life was so boring. "No entertainment, no cinemas, no money."

"What is money?" I said impatiently. "Just pound notes in your hand. But what will it buy you? That house you live in which you think is old-fashioned and simple would fetch £25,000 on the London property market. How long would you have to work in London to save up to buy a house like that? . . ." I think I lost the argument. I was arguing against history. Emigration once it has a hold is frighteningly difficult to stop. Well-informed Irish economists admit that the immigration laws in America and the economic slow-down in Britain have had perhaps more to do with drying up migration than Ireland's new industrial activity.

Once emigration reaches endemic proportions (as it has in Ireland) a kind of human depression and a social despair set in. It was George Bernard Shaw, Irish himself of course, who wrote that Ireland is "a place of futility, failure and endless pointless talk. . . ." Many in Ireland who know its country ways best would not dispute that; they would merely say it was the inheritance of so vast an emigration. So many have left, often the brightest and best (and they became Presidents and poets in other lands), that the population at home has become unbalanced. In a recent survey of 231 households in the West of Ireland, it was found that 52 people were living by themselves: 13 widows, 3 widowers, 4 spinsters, and 32 bachelors. Perhaps the saddest group of all were the bachelors: most were older men who had not the economic wherewithal (or

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

perhaps the courage) to ask a woman to marry them. James Healy wrote in *The Death of an Irish Town* (1968):

> "Today whole villages around Charlestown—for centuries the spawning streams of the people of Mayo and Sligo—are silted by depopulation, and where in my memory there were shoals of children, more populous than the salmon parr in the town's rich river, no child plays and there is no promise of a child."

4. *Sending Money Home, or the Paradox of Remittances*

> *"In every way, foreign workers help us to earn our daily bread. . . . Although foreign workers are in Germany because at home they live in indigent circumstances, Germany needs them urgently. They are dependent on us. But we are even more dependent on them for otherwise they would not be here."*
> WILLY BRANDT *(1973)*

THE IRISH CASE vividly shows up the destructive impact of overseas remittances. It is too often blithely assumed that because Europe's present-day immigrants send home $2.5 billion a year this is unanswerably a good thing. The study *Colour and Citizenship*,[13] that 800-page result of five years of British liberal scholarship, gives only a dozen lines to the impact on the developing countries. "Remittances," it says, "have brought great improvements to the land and to the villages." But it produces no evidence to substantiate its case.[14]

There is a darker picture in Hugh Brody's detailed and careful study of the West of Ireland.[15] He recounts how, years ago, people would take turns to help each other with the harvest. There would be *ceilidhs* or celebrations in the evening in the house of whoever's turn it was to be helped. This way of living lightened the drudge of the heavy agricultural work—but migration and remittances have broken this down. Families now feel more self-interested. The postal orders come from America or from Britain, and no one wants to tell anyone else how much they are getting. "The displacement of *cooring* (communal work)", Brody writes, "and all the sociability of mutual aid has left each household in extraordinary isolation." Observers of the Irish agricultural scene point to a devastatingly destructive individualism that makes even the simplest cooperative venture—like building a road along a line of cottages—extraordinarily difficult. Remittances force a withdrawal; heavy drinking (and bricklaying too) often becomes its only external manifestation.

Reports from other countries make similar observations. A survey in Portugal reveals that 32% of remittances are spent on consumer items and domestic appliances, 24% on education for the children, and 38% on purchases of land and housing. According to an official government report (given to a working party of the OECD Manpower and Social Affairs Committee),

> "possession of a house is regarded as the best investment one can possibly make. But while it is an obvious sign of fortune before the eyes of the whole village, it is also paradoxically enough a window display of 'French comfort' and serves as an advertisement for an even greater exodus. . . . This vulgarising of architecture is perhaps the most revealing sign of the contradiction maintained by emigration. . . . These clumsy imitations of a civilisation of which the emigrants have only retained the external signs of prosperity show that the Portuguese always want village approval for their distant success: but the upsetting of cultural traditions will perhaps be responsible for breaking up the rural community and will thus increasingly jeopardize the chances of permanent return."[16]

The only published research we have at the moment on the impact of migration on the West Indies is Stuart Philpott's study in Montserrat.[17] The revealing data on remittances indicate that they are mostly spent on education, housebuilding, the upkeep of children left behind, and (before the restrictions on immigration into Britain and America) on financing relatives who want to emigrate. Education itself only increases the propensity to migrate, and housebuilding has become merely a standing symbol of the "good life" abroad.

The impact of remittances on agriculture is rather more complex. Basically, remittances are regarded by those who receive them as the chance

[13] E. J. B. Rose & associates, *Colour and Citizenship —A report on British Race Relations* (Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 54.

[14] Israel is occasionally cited as an example of a country where remittances have been remarkably helpful in aiding economic development. But Israel, of course, in its stage of development, cannot be compared with the countries I am writing about. Consumer values were well advanced from the beginning. Its agricultural sector, led by kibbutz idealists, did not need to worry about holding people on the land; and its industrial sector was quickly established.

[15] Hugh Brody, *Inishkillane: Change and Decline in the West of Ireland* (Allen Lane, 1973).

[16] *Cyclically Determined Homeward Flow of Migrant Workers* (ed. Bernard Kayser, OECD, 1972).

[17] Stuart B. Philpott, *West Indian Migration—The Montserrat Case* (Athlone Press, 1973).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for release from agricultural work. Rearing cattle, however, is an exception. Cattle are regarded as an investment; their upkeep is not time-consuming, and the market is good and reliable. (Regrettably, Philpott does not attempt to evaluate whether the shift from arable farming to pastoralism is a plus or a minus in terms of the development in Montserrat, although he states in passing that the Government is worried about the demise of cotton growing and that there is a shortage of good pasture.)

One clear and valuable outcome of migration has been the break-up of the exploitative cotton estates. Their decline was a direct result of the shortage of labour brought about by emigration and the reluctance of the remaining workers to labour for small wages when they were receiving remittances. Furthermore, those who were prepared to stay on were more easily mobilised to strike. But what does this mean in terms of land redistribution? Is there any way of knowing just what the potential for rural development is? To what extent can imaginative rural policies form the basis of an alternative to labour emigration? Philpott's circumstantial evidence seems to suggest that migration could be a prime factor in undermining the future of the rural economy. Land has been abandoned; communal work sharing which made heavy rural work more festive and less of a chore has practically disappeared; disputes in the community have increased and migration itself has acquired certain "fantasy" qualities—"I was only half a man before I went out"—that inhibit a rational weighing of social and personal alternatives.

ANOTHER MAJOR PART OF the remittances argument has been the suggestion that they help the balance of payments, often a crucial impediment to growth in developing countries. But here again the evidence seems to overpower the wishful thinking.

Professor Nikolinakos' study of Greek/German exchanges[18] showed that the familiarisation of Greek migrants working in Germany (and the Greek public at large) with German goods led to a surprising situation where the *increasing* volume of remittances covered a *decreasing* proportion of the growing trade deficit. The paradoxical problem has been summed up by Roger Böhning who is the International Labour Office's chief expert on migration:

> "Mechanically adding remittances to the trade deficit makes even less sense than mechanically subtracting emigrants from the unemployed, quite apart from the possibly inflationary repercussions of such an inflow of disposable income. On the individual level, remittances are used in the first instance to cater for daily needs or to pay off old debts. A continuing inflow subsequently goes on consumer goods, sometimes of quite a fancy kind and often of foreign origin. None of this expenditure is more than marginally productive. Moreover, when the migrant extends his stay abroad and possibly sends for his family the remittances begin to dry up.
>
> "In macro-economic terms, the foreign currency tends to be used, wherever there is no strict control of imports, to pay for imports of foreign consumer goods by the non-migrant population and by recipients of remittances. Thus, there is an increasing familiarisation with foreign consumer goods brought about by the publicity surrounding migration and by the emigrants themselves. It leads in effect to a widespread disdain for domestic products and a higher value placed on foreign goods. And it leaves little if any room for domestic productive investment."[19]

BUT IF REMITTANCES ARE NOT what they are made out to be, then surely the fact that a returned emigrant comes home with new skills and experience is an undeniable asset in the development of a primitive industrial economy?

Madeleine Trebous, whose study of Algerian workers in France is the most comprehensive and detailed work on a migrant community, has attempted to answer this question.[20]

Algeria is typical of many poor countries in the European orbit. In 1930 the country's urban population was 300,000—about 5% of the total. By 1960, however, it had risen to 25%, by 1963 to 33%; in 1966 it was 38%. Rural population in this time almost doubled. Underemployment in 1963 was 49% for Algeria as a whole and 64% among the active urban population. The Algerian Plan Directorate, although allowing for the continuation of 300,000 jobs overseas, calculates that it needs between now and 1980 to create 60,000–80,000 jobs a year outside agriculture just to stay abreast of itself.

The Algerian migration to France is an old one. It began in 1871 with the departure of farm labourers and small urban tradesmen. In 1912 an official survey counted 4,000 to 5,000 Algerians in France "engaged in laborious tasks in soapworks and the docks, especially in Marseilles." Since 1945 the migratory movement had grown rapidly.

[18] Marios Nikolinakos, "Zur Frage der Auswanderungs-effekte in den Emigrationsländern, *Das Argument*, vol. 13, No. 9–10 (December 1971), pp. 782–799.

[19] *Migration of Workers as an Element in Employment Policy* (International Labour Office, 1973) D. 22/1973.

[20] *Migration and Development—The Case of Algeria* (OECD, 1970).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Between 1948–1958 some 200,000 Algerians arrived in France. There are now 800,000 (including family members). According to the Plan Directorate's figures, roughly a quarter of the active Algerian population in permanent employment was away in Europe in 1966.

Today the Algerians tend to find work in the major cities in the larger industrial firms. At Renault's Billancourt works at the beginning of 1965, all the applicants for the thousands of jobs that had to be filled were foreigners. "The French worker", as Marc Ouin of Renault told me, "has an adverse image of industry. He'd rather have a white collar job, even if it's less well paid. . . ." Renault employs 95,000 workers in its French plants, and of these 21,000 are immigrants. Increasingly the Algerians are beginning to move up the economic ladder. The proportion of Algerian skilled workers has more than doubled in eighteen years. Between 1953–1968 the number rose from 5.2% of the total to 11.1%.

One would hope that, after a period of work in France, these increasingly skilled and knowledgeable industrial workers will return home to furnish the much needed experience as Algerian industrial expansion begins to shift gears. Certainly their links with the homeland are stronger than, say, Commonwealth immigrants in Britain (not least because there is the deterrent of having to live 5 years in France before one can apply for citizenship). Attitude surveys of the Algerian in France suggest that "most" Algerians would "rather have a job in Algeria than in France" even if it means settling for a lower wage. Yet the reality of the situation, according to Madeleine Trebous, is more complex. There is a gross imbalance between the kind of job Algerians are doing in France and the kind of jobs that are being opened up back home. Two out of every three Algerian workers in Europe are employed in building and construction. Assuming Algeria carries out its planned vocational training of workers back home in the building, metal-working and transport sectors, about 70% of the workers trained in Europe may not be able to find a job in Algeria unless they change their trade or obtain a higher level of skills. Yet the jobs that are likely to show unfilled vacancies in Algeria—in chemicals, hydrocarbons, and textiles—are simply not the industries in which Algerians are employed in large numbers in France.

Inevitably, given the dictates of this situation (and it is repeated in all the sending countries), the immigrants are lengthening their stay in Europe. They are asking their families to join them, and although they keep on talking of "going home", they rarely do, except for holidays.

> "The migrant then, is constantly torn, [Böhning writes] between his desire to overcome his deprivations and his desire to return home to a social context where he must feel the deprivations even more deeply than when he left. The result is that again and again he extends his stay abroad, and he re-emigrates repeatedly after returning home for a short while. Finally the process will lead to a significant number of target workers tending to settle down in the receiving country if not for ever, at least until retirement age."[21]

THE SUM OF THESE ELEMENTS of impact on the developing countries is not an attractive one. Aspirations are raised; the agricultural economy undermined; balance of payments benefits are minimally affected, if at all; enterprising families are lost indefinitely to a foreign economy.

5. *Immigrant Labour, Emigrant Capital*

IF THEY DON'T BENEFIT from migration (at least in the long run), and our social stability is threatened by it, what arguments are there for continuing it? The only ones left that are worthy of consideration are those of our captains of industry who say we need it for economic growth.[22]

The answer can be given in two ways, depending on how we evaluate the seriousness of the energy crisis. If Europe's growth does flatten out because of continual energy problems, then there is going to be plenty of native unemployed labour that can be used. There is, however, a danger. Unless there is an extraordinarily severe recession, native European workers will opt for the dole rather than do jobs that are "beneath them." European workers are increasingly becoming alienated from mechanical repetitive jobs. They are voting with their feet. An expanding economy

[21] W. R. Böhning, *The Economic Effects of the Employment of Foreign Workers*, an unpublished working document of the OECD (Paris, 1973), p. 19.

[22] Madeleine Trebous notes in her Algerian study (p. 202) that France receives young men whose "economic value" is at a maximum, whose "rearing" has cost France nothing and who, for the major part, will not have to be supported for the period of inactivity in old age. (Most Algerian workers, although a decreasing number, still return home after a spell of work in France.)

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and an influx of less demanding workers has enabled them to move away and turn their backs on large sectors of our industrial life. After four years of high British unemployment (1968–1972), there was at the end only a slight trickle of movement back to less desirable jobs. "No jobs are better than those jobs" is rapidly becoming the worker's conventional wisdom. Yet, ironically, when they see immigrants at work when they are unemployed, their resentment grows.

Because of these trends, a number of far-sighted European firms have begun to experiment with what they call "job enrichment." Philips and Vredestein (in Holland), and Volvo and Gränges (in Sweden) are perhaps the best known. Breaking down the monotonous assembly-line discipline, they have replaced it with small teams of workers who each work on a complete operation instead of on specialised tasks. At Vredestein, the world's largest cycle-tyre manufacturers, a worker today will actually be responsible for the production of a *whole* tyre instead of, as before, merely being asked to screw in the valve, or to seal the rim. All these firms now report a sharp drop in absenteeism and turnover. (Gränges, a steel firm with 25,000 workers, reports that it has reduced the turnover of its labour force from 46% to 18%.)

In the service industry, it is perhaps more difficult to improve working conditions. A bus is a bus is a bus—but a salary is also a salary. And we should be prepared to accept a significant rise in wages for jobs that have to be done, but that native Europeans no longer want to do.

If, on the other hand, we overcome the energy crisis and economic growth becomes a possibility again (the most likely solution, I suspect, although growth will probably be retarded), we have a rather different scenario. Immigration will increase. Social turbulence becomes even more likely; for there is clearly a limit to the number of foreigners Europeans will tolerate in their midst. (Could it conceivably be 22 million by 1980—which is the UN projection? Just to mention it sounds ridiculous.) And we know from militant spokesmen like Enoch Powell in Britain and Schwartzenbach in Switzerland that this sense of limits can find expression in the political arena in an eloquent if unattractive way. That it will make itself felt in the streets is also probable.

Nor is this all. As the Swiss experience seems to show, once migrants form a large part of the working population (30% in Switzerland), they themselves become a major inflationary element. This is because a large and settled immigrant population calls for the social infrastructure to service it: new houses, schools, hospitals, etc.[23] This "cost", according to Swiss economists, outweighs the windfall gain they give because of the youthfulness of the first arrivals.

In response to these problems industrialists are increasingly becoming exponents of the principle of "rotation." The principle of "family reunion", they argue, should not be allowed. Young migrants should come for two years and then go back home to their families. Then another batch of young men should be allowed in to replace them. These young men can be housed relatively easily in barracks attached to factories and they will thus have low visibility in the community. But advocates of this course ignore certain issues. Where there are large-scale male-only communities, there has always been large-scale prostitution, with its normal concomitants of crime, especially in association with drugs. In addition, wives and children will come illegally if they cannot come legally. (Germany and Holland, which have discouraged family reunion more than other European countries, have found this to be true.) Again, where there is large-scale illegal migration, blackmail becomes the order of the day and sweat-shops mushroom. Furthermore, as the South African experience

---

Mme Trebous quotes a calculation that estimates the cost of rearing an Algerian worker back home as one franc per day. If one assumes the "rearing period" is 15 years, the total cost of rearing an Algerian worker is approximately Fr. 5,000 (*i.e.* about £500). Therefore, the French economy chalks up a windfall of Fr. 10,000 million for every 200,000 immigrant workers. In fact there were (1970) 700,000 Algerian workers in France out of a total immigrant work force of 1,770,000. For the Algerian section of this alone it means a bonus to the French economy of £375 million.

But if this "cost of rearing" is calculated by European standards—which would be more sound as the Algerian worker takes the place of Frenchmen—this figure must be multiplied by at least five. It is interesting to note by way of comparison that Kindleberger calculated that each post-war refugee from East Germany to West Germany represented a gift of £5,000.

[23] Ironically enough, these settled immigrants themselves demand new supplies of immigrant labour. A major factor behind new immigration in Germany and Switzerland today is the need to service the social and economic demands of the relatively older flow of immigrants. See Stephen Castles and Godula Kosack, *Immigrant Workers and Class Structures in Western Europe*, (Oxford University Press, 1973), p. 389. However, there is a case that they have rather overstated their argument.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

shows, once migration rotates and limits are put on the time workers can stay in the industrial areas, three things happen. First, young men have to keep coming back because the industrialists do not have enough first-time-only migrants for their needs. Secondly, the agricultural economy becomes even more undermined than it is under a family migrant system. Finally, family break-up and venereal disease spread like a plague.[24]

THERE IS, IT IS ARGUED, one other way out and it should be mentioned—it is to take *our* capital to *their* labour. Albert Coppé, who was until eighteen months ago the EEC Commissioner responsible for social affairs, has espoused this view. Recently the Dutch Government have issued a (white paper) memorandum arguing along such lines. Indeed the excitement that swept Holland last year when a major Dutch textile firm announced it was moving lock-stock-and-barrel to a Third World country was quite astonishing. However, one only has to mention the textile example to see how weak the thesis is.

Tito

YUGOSLAVIA *has stepped up its attempts to check the outflow of immigrants, currently numbering over 1m., who leave the country in search of work in the more advanced countries of Europe, mainly West Germany.*

Under new measures adopted at the beginning of this month skilled workers will find it harder to leave the country unless they are trained for jobs for which there is little demand in Yugoslavia. Unskilled workers will in most cases be able to leave as before.

These measures follow a long debate in Belgrade about policy towards the massive emigrant labour force which amounts to a twentieth of the total population. On the one hand, these men acquire skills and remit large portions of their earnings which keep Yugoslavia's payments in the black, quite apart from easing the country's massive unemployment problem. But President Tito recently complained about this drain on the country's manpower. It reduced the country's ability to defend itself, he said, and migrants were being ideologically corrupted in capitalist countries.

In holding back skilled workers but allowing others to leave, the new measures would seem to be a compromise between the two views.

FINANCIAL TIMES (*London*)

Once a protected European industry moves to where its comparative advantage dictates, and where arguably it should have been anyway, what is left?—approximately 95% of European industry! Certainly the hospitals, subway systems, roadsweepers, building sites, and coalmines are not going to move, and indeed they are the sectors of major immigrant occupations. It is doubtful if Renault, Mercedes, Vredestein, and MAN are going to move too. It is not that they are short-sighted or timid about moving outside Europe when the occasion demands. (Renault has 16 factories in the Third World.) But they are only going to do it when it pays—when local demands are high and when production runs are long. After all, European industry is loath to invest in its own nearby underdeveloped regions—how much greater is the reluctance to do so in uncertain and unstable countries overseas. Moreover, it is doubtful if European governments (Germany excepted, perhaps) with their new oil-induced balance-of-payments deficits will smile benignly on large-scale overseas investment. Even if they did it is doubtful if the kind of industrial development they would introduce in the Third World would help adjust the invidious rural/urban imbalance. It would, in all likelihood, cause even more young people to leave the land. One expert has argued that *increased urban employment in developing countries merely induces increased urban migration.* He cites the example of how, in 1964, private employers in Nairobi and the Kenyan Government agreed to increase their payrolls by 15% at once, on condition that the trade unions agreed to accept a wage moratorium. In the event the Government could not afford to increase its labour force, but private employers did; and "this acted like a magnet attracting new workers into the urban labour market."[25]

No, the second scenario will not work. The possibilities of the outward movement of capital are limited and Europe cannot go on absorbing more immigrant labour, married or single. Part of the answer to the dilemma lies in our own underdeveloped regions—in the North East of England, in the Massif Central of France, in the Mezzogiorno of Italy. Necessity compels us to use our own

[24] See Francis Wilson, *Migrant Labour in South Africa* (South African Council of Churches and SPROCAS, 1972).

[25] Elkan, *Unemployment in Low Income Countries.* British Association for the Advancement of Science Annual Meeting, 1970 (Section F, 4 September 1970).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

surplus labour more effectively; surely a much more aggressive European regional policy is needed than we have at present. However, Europeans must be prepared to accept the fact that in the end labour shortages may compel us to reduce economic growth. Like it or not, Europe may be forced back to the crossroads at which the Arab oil crisis first made us pause.

6. The Rural Economy—the Source of the Problem

WHATEVER CHANGES are necessary at the European end in order to limit immigration they will have to be backed up by changes in the developing world. The problem of immigration must be tackled at its source—in the fields and villages. There is perhaps a small lesson from history to be learnt here. The Agricultural Revolution in Britain which played a central role in making the Industrial Revolution possible was in many of its aspects extraordinarily simple. Certainly it was not tractors or combine-harvesters that produced dramatic new yields. It was sowing seeds in straight lines rather than broadcasting them and the introduction of the horse hoe which made extensive weeding possible. It was Turnip Townshend and his notion of winter feed, and Coke of Holkham who believed in crop rotation and manuring. Tropical agriculture is, to be sure, more difficult and complex, but the kernel of truth remains valid: large agricultural changes can be wrought by relatively simple ideas.

Certainly this has been the lesson of Taiwan and Japan and, to a lesser extent, of South Korea and Egypt. Their experience demonstrates that underemployment in agriculture is not the result of "too many people on the land"; it is rather the failure to organise labour-intensive agricultural systems. Japan's volcanic soils are poor rice lands, yet rice yields in Japan are higher than any of the other countries where rice is the major foodgrain. Farms in Taiwan have yields per acre *six* times higher than the Philippines or India. In Taiwan in 1950 agricultural employment was 17 million. It has increased at 1.2% a year, reaching 2.1% by 1968. This success has been achieved by

> "new inputs such as compound varieties, fertilizers and other biological-chemical forms of capital, improved implements useful for breaking seasonal bottlenecks and improved technical knowledge..."[26]

It has not been achieved by mechanisation. The agricultural revolution in Taiwan and Japan has been labour-intensive. This is why these countries have more people on the land than any other developing countries.[27]

But how to persuade a conservative rural society to open itself to change? Centuries of encrusted practice have to be undone. Can educated manpower be redeployed into agricultural extension? In the developed countries the ratio of government agricultural agents to farm families is about 1 to 400—in developing countries it is an average of 1 to 8,000. Will agriculture ever be introduced as a principal subject in school curricula? What is needed is also to change policies of public investment, trade, exchange rates and prices that often discriminate against agriculture. Excessive export taxes and rigid

---

[26] Bruce F. Johnson "Agriculture and Economic Development: The Relevance of the Japanese Experience", Food Research Institute Studies 6, No. 3 (Stanford University, 1960), p. 288.

[27] **Agricultural Workers per 100 acres 1965**

COUNTRY	NUMBER OF WORKERS PER 100 ACRES
Japan	87
Taiwan (Formosa)	75
India	36
S. Korea	79
Philippines	29
Ceylon	49
Colombia	20
Brazil	17
Mexico	12
Egypt	71
Israel	11
Yugoslavia	29
Morocco	10
U.S.A.	less than 2

(Derived from tables in FAO Production Yearbook 1969)

It is important to note, however, that Japan, South Korea and Taiwan who lead this table have rather special reasons for their success. All have undergone major land reforms initiated by stern military régimes. In Japan's case the cost of this was borne by the already developed industrial sector; in the Taiwan and South Korean cases by the very large American financial assistance. Other developing countries cannot expect to have similar good fortune. Perhaps this is why the "international development establishment" appears to be increasingly attracted by the Chinese Model. China, it is said, has succesfully reorganised its land ownership system, increased productivity and kept people on the land, all without subsidy from the industrial sector or from outside.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

price controls restrict farm earnings, and squeeze the farmer who has to buy manufactured imports and consumer goods from protected high-cost domestic industries.

More questions, more doubts. Can we foresee a change in the patterns of agricultural research? The U.S., Israel, and Australia spend the equivalent of 2–3% of their agricultural commodity value on research; Japan and West Europe spend about 1%. But the Third World spends only about one-tenth to four-fifths of 1%. Will the rhetoric about land reform cease, and agrarian reorganisation begin? Large-scale farming does *not* necessarily mean greater productivity. Research in Colombia, in India, and in Brazil has shown that if land, labour, and capital are given prices appropriate to their relative scarcities, farms smaller than 25 acres can be economically more efficient than larger farms.[28] One often forgets in the ideological fracas that land reform is not just a question of morality but often of sheer efficiency.

Finally, agricultural change means a new and different Third World politics. Can such a political leadership emerge? Governments in the Third World are big city, big office, and big-car-centred. The parliamentarians, civil servants, and political chiefs are living monuments to an expired idealism. The example of Julius Nyerere of Tanzania who leaves his desk, scales down his salary, and spends three months a year helping to dig irrigation ditches, is extraordinarily rare.

COMPLEMENTARY TO WHAT HAPPENS on the land are the urgencies of developing labour-intensive industry. Schumacher has called this "intermediate technology", *i.e.* something between the very old and the very new. He puts it this way:

> "If we define the level of technology in terms of 'equipment cost per workplace' we can call the indigenous technology (symbolically speaking) a £1 technology while that the of the modern west could be called a £1000 technology. The current attempt of the developing countries, supported by foreign aid, to infiltrate the £1000 technology into their economies inevitably kills off the £1 technology at an alarming rate, destroying traditional workplaces at a much faster rate than modern workplaces can be created. . . . The average annual income per worker and the average capital per workplace in the developed countries appear to stand in a relationship of roughly 1:1. This implies, in general terms, that it takes one man one year to create one work place, or that a man would have to save one month's earnings a year for twelve years to be able to buy his own workplace. If the relationship were 1:10, it would require ten man years to create one workplace, or a man would have to save a month's earnings for 120 years before he could make himself independent. This of course is an improbability, and it follows that the £1000 technology transplanted into a country the bulk of which is stuck on the £1 technology simply cannot spread by any process of normal growth. . . . Its 'demonstration effect' is wholly negative. The vast majority of people, to whom the £1000 technology is wholly inaccessible, *simply 'give up'. An appropriate technology, on the* other hand, would be one which would be 'vastly superior' in productivity to their traditional technology (in its present state of decay) while at the same time being vastly cheaper and simpler than the highly sophisticated and enormously capital intensive technology of the West. As a general guide it may be said that this 'intermediate technology' should be on the level of £70–£100 equipment cost per average workplace. At this level it would stand in a tolerably realistic relationship to the annual income obtainable by an able worker outside the westernized sectors."[29]

It is also possible to scale down some of the excesses of imported technology. Take the case of the production of plywood in Korea. What at first appears to be a manufacturing process bearing great similarities to that carried out in the rich West turns out on inspection to be full of innovative indigenous variations. In America mechanical sensors are used to detect defects in pieces of timber, and the entire slab is then discarded; in Japan defects are discovered and then cut out by hand. In Korea, the defective area is located and then patched up by hand.

It is this kind of innovation and direction European governments should be backing with their aid policies. Such aid should be "untied." Local costs should be financed and priority given to régimes which attempt to put their countries on a small-scale agriculture course. One welcome departure was the announcement by Robert McNamara at the International Monetary Fund Meeting in Nairobi last September that the World Bank was now seeking to lend 70% of its agricultural finance to small farmers (*i.e.* those with less than five hectares).[30] He has, at long last, thrown overboard the Bank's traditional preference for large individual farms or State enterprises. (In over 25 years of operations the World

[28] McNamara, p. 67. See also Edgar Owens and Robert Shaw, *Development Reconsidered* (D. C. Heath, 1972), pp. 59–61.

[29] Schumacher (Maier), p. 357.

[30] Although McNamara's speech attracted much attention, as befits the head of the world's largest development agency, it should not be forgotten that many development economists have been arguing this cause for at least two decades. Regrettably they were ignored by both Left and Right—the Left who believed there could be no development unless you had your own steel works and state farms, and the Right who were eager to open up opportunities for Western free-enterprise investment.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bank has spent less than $1 billion out of its $25 billion of lending on this problem!) However, Charles Elliot, an economist at the University of East Anglia, has argued that the World Bank will not find it easy to put its new ideals into practice.

> "It's one thing to say that lending to small farmers offers a way to crack poverty at the bottom; it's something else again to put together a project that actually does that in a way that does not overload the institutions, systems, and individuals involved."[31]

7. *An Irish Village*

IT MIGHT NOT BE inapposite for a McNamara to search for some of the answers by visiting Glencolumkille, a village stuck out on the westernmost tip of Donegal. The people here tell you their next parish is New York; and so indeed it might be. It is archetypal emigration country where the bones of the earth stick through the starved skin. Yet it is now one of the very few areas in the West of Ireland that is actually holding its local population.

It is the home of one of the world's most imaginative rural development schemes and its architect is Fr James McDyer, a rough-hewn, country-born parish priest. "The key to progress in the West," McDyer told me, "is to break down the myth of emigration—that a better life can be had somewhere else. . . ." Much of the incentive to emigrate, he argues, is not economic, but social. "Young people have been led to believe they need urban type entertainment, the bright lights. So I say let's give it to them." His first task eighteen years ago was to build a community hall for social activities; and it was all built by voluntary labour. "From the day we cut the first sod," McDyer recounts, "until we formally opened it, the time lapse was precisely twelve weeks. . . . I maintain that in a voluntary operation, the chief instigator should take an active part and even engage in the most menial tasks. This I did, and I found that morale was kept at a high level throughout."

Now the Community hall is an established part of community life. Drama—McDyer himself produces three plays each winter—films, badminton, card games, lectures and of course *ceilidhs*—evenings that start at 11 p.m. and finish at 3 a.m., where Irish music and dancing still hold both young and old alike. McDyer's next achievement was a successful fight for electricity and piped water to be brought into his valley.

But the backbone of the economic life of the community is a number of co-operative enterprises. There is a knitting co-op of 80 women making Donegal sweaters, a hand-weaving tweed factory employing fifteen weavers, a mechanical knitting factory, a silver-work factory and a shop in Dublin near fashionable Grafton Street to sell some of the output. The fishing industry, abandoned in the early part of the century, is being revitalised. A salmon canning factory is in full production, and while I was there McDyer called the first meeting of local people interested in starting a boat-building industry. Vegetable growing that hardly existed in former times is a major enterprise; that, too, supports a canning factory. Rough mountain pasture has been fertilised and is now holding a greater density of sheep. In the last few years, McDyer has put a large part of his energies into the tourist industry. The danger, of course, with tourism is that absentee entrepreneurs move in and the spin-off into the local economy is much reduced. But in Glencolumkille the local people have built twenty thatched cottages and are renting them at up to £35 a week in the high season. (And despite the general dip in tourism in Ireland because of the "political situation" they have maintained a 60% occupancy rate throughout the year.) Soon after these were established, the combined co-operatives bought a local hotel that came on the market. There is now no manager and the staff run it themselves. . . .

When I left Glencolumkille, McDyer's thoughts were focused on the organisation of a communal farming enterprise. There are 4,000 farms in South West Donegal that have an average farm income of a mere £138 a year. McDyer has persuaded 112 of these unproductive farmers to sink their lot in a communal farm. This would provide 18,000 acres of undivided mountain and 1,200 acres of lowland. The farm would be run by the younger men, and it would, McDyer argues, provide "perpetual security and ownership for the present holders and their heirs, maximum full time employment and the greatest possible productivity. . . ." The Agricultural

[31] Charles Elliot, "McNamara's Bank Revolution", in *The Internationalist*, November 1973.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Institute and the Irish Agricultural Organisation Society have passed it as economically viable.

DESPITE MCDYER'S UNDOUBTED SUCCESS, as I went around Dublin talking to politicians and economists, there is a certain cynicism about his methods. One influential economist argued to me that if every village in the West of Ireland produced at the rate of the valley of Glencolumkille, the agricultural market would become quickly depressed. This is, of course, true. But for all practical purposes, the argument is long-range, and irrelevant. The more pressing one is to keep Ireland's population intact so as to provide a viable base for national economic activity. And there is enough room in the agricultural market for quite a number of Glencolumkilles before prices are ever affected.

It is sad to think that if McDyer's methods had been tried 100—or even 40—years ago, emigration might have been seriously curtailed before it did the tragic damage it did. In those days it would have been so much easier to make rural development work! Worldly consumer values were not so seductively developed, and village (or valley) self-sufficiency would have been much easier to attain. What is significant is that after a century of continuous haemorrhage, McDyer's methods have actually had an effect on the open wounds.

Indeed those developing countries which have had most success have, as it were, used the "McDyer model." Japan, Israel, and Taiwan are outstanding examples of how co-operatives can involve millions of small farmers in modern agriculture and small-scale economic enterprises. (In these countries, nearly 100% of all farmers belong to co-operatives—as compared with 50% in India and 5% in Mexico.) Yet it is palpably true that in many developing countries farmer co-operatives have not performed well.

> "They have been stifled by an excess of government paternalism and control from above. When local co-operatives are organised and run by government officers, illiterate small-scale farmers usually regard them as government agencies whose purpose is to give them help in time of need. Accordingly many see no reason to pay their bills or repay loans. In many places local élites have taken control of local co-operatives and operated them for their own benefit rather than for the benefit of all farmer members."[32]

In the end it comes down to the quality of the local leadership (as in the McDyer case) and to the dynamic and intelligent role of government (as in the Taiwan, Israeli, Japanese, South Korean, Tanzanian, Chinese and Egyptian cases).

But both sound administration and good inspirational rural leadership are rare commodities in today's Third World. One must be cautiously realistic about the possibilities of effective action on the rural economy. Yet for all our reservations, it seems this is the direction towards which a rational analysis of the great Immigration Debate pushes us.

THE QUESTION IN THE END IS: do we accept unlimited migration and all its evils, or do we attempt to integrate our economic, immigration, and regional policies, and our overseas aid policies into one comprehensive, far-sighted and sensitive conception? It will call for political leadership in Europe to explain to the electorate what the true price of the massive immigration in the last 20 years has been. To tell them that it is necessary, and possible, to cut it down. (Of course I do not mean to suggest sending home those who have already made Europe their home—a minority.) But we will have to pay to finance the transition—an historic transition which will leave both sides better off.

The alternative is to wait for the coming crisis of the "new proletariat." It is one of the appalling truths of our political systems that only critical urgencies compel change, and the Arab oil embargo was the latest in a long line of such dispiriting lessons. But we should be clear what the crisis this time could involve—massive racial conflagration (Ulster-style), all over Europe. We are perhaps faced with a situation which Robert McNamara has characterised as the choice 'between the political costs of reform and the political risks of rebellion." Your move.

[32] Owens and Shaw, p.77.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Constantine FitzGibbon

Norman Douglas

Memoir of an Unwritten Biography

CAPRI. Something to do with goats, I assume. No, no, an island: oh yes, the Coney Island of Naples. In a way, and when the boatloads of Neapolitan day trippers have vomited up their pasta and vino on the *vaporetto* that ends their day's outing, and the lights are coming on in the great semi-circle of the bay, from Sorrento to the Posilipo, a little jewel, a little precious stone, anyhow semi-precious, all right a bit of costume jewellery, a small and humpbacked island, without a proper beach and with the dark hills looming above the bright piazza, filled with dumpy Nordics—English, Germans, Swedes—still sweating in their flowered shirts and dresses, still talking above the music of transistors, astounded by the cost of drinks before the cafés whose tables almost overlap: "The Blue Grotto . . . Five thousand, fifty thousand, genuine Roman coral, the man said. . . . Where do we eat? . . . Ah, you were robbed." And a few doe-eyed young men, Italians perhaps or Americans, shirts knotted in front, remnants of what was once called "the mauve international", holding hands maybe in the twilight, their eyes averted from their hairy, dirty, guitar-strung nephews with equally grimy, pimply un-made-up maidens. No holding hands there, to the loud guffaw, the Liverpool Beat, already old-fashioned, ageing hippies, beads and headbands, black beneath the bare or sandalled toenails, a faint stench of cannabis. Capri! Ah, if only you had known it a generation ago! No thank you, I am not interested in buying a souvenir of the Emperor Tiberius. *Grazie, no!*

I knew Capri, a generation ago. I spent a year and more there, from the autumn of 1948 until the end of 1949, trying and failing to write a life of Norman Douglas, which is why I went there and why I am writing about Capri now. "Ah," they said to me then, "if only you had known Capri twenty-five years ago." Norman, who knew the island better than anyone, Capresi or foreign, said: fifty years. In his earliest writings, on the other hand, committed to paper at the very beginning of this century, he blamed the ridiculous nature of the Capri legend on the Romantics or perhaps even on those young Englishmen who had made the Grand Tour in the eighteenth. An island, in fact, of permanent and perpetual decadence accompanied by an ever-increasing vulgarisation, the decadence essentially sexual, the vulgarisation a crude exploitation thereof. Yet it was a place of charm, from October to May, and perhaps still is, in the wintertime. In the old days, whenever they may have been, it was presumably magical all the year round.

MY COMMISSION TO WRITE a biography of Norman Douglas came about as follows. In 1946 when I was at last discharged—"separated" I think was the odd but technical term—from the United States army, I retired, at the age of twenty-six, to Bermuda with the rank of major (retd.) and several months of severance pay due me. I chose Bermuda, where I planned to "become a writer" after six years of soldiering, for a very simple reason. An aunt of mine owned a cottage there, which she was prepared to lend to my wife and myself, rent-free. Soon enough my first novel was written and with great rapidity refused not merely by publishers in London and New York, but even by agents. It is a familiar story, though I think that to be turned down by agents, *agents*, is an unusually humiliating twist. Anyhow, with my severance pay exhausted and my novel apparently unpublishable (it later appeared in half-a-dozen languages), my next, and again classic, step was to become a schoolmaster, for my wife and I were then, we reckoned, the poorest white people in Bermuda. However my luck changed, or rather was changed by Frederic

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Wakeman, who had made a million dollars or so out of his second novel, *The Hucksters*, and who persuaded his New York publisher to accept my first, *The Arabian Bird*. An English publisher picked it up for London in New York, and all seemed set fair. I gave up my job as a schoolmaster and in 1947 wrote my second novel, living largely on credit and the anticipation of royalties comparable to Freddy's. I had even sold a piece, my first published piece for which I was paid, to *The Atlantic Monthly* and a short story, for which I was paid a large sum, to *Cosmopolitan*. So far, so good.

So far, but no farther. By the spring of 1948 *The Arabian Bird* had not yet been published. Worse, "my" American publisher and several of his competitors had turned down my second novel, *The Iron Hoop*, while my English publisher had not even bothered to acknowledge receipt of typescript. Worse still, my credit was running low in Bermuda, and within the foreseeable future must run out altogether, while my tastes as a major (retd.), fortified by those enormous, anticipated royalties, had certainly not decreased. Gloomily we set off for New York reduced to the uttermost humiliation that can befall a writer, reduced to "finding a job" that required no qualifications whatsoever, not even a university degree. My wife even found us a horrible, minute apartment: Flatbush, she assured me, was really a very nice place to live. I refused even to look at it, and spent the money I had not got with friends I hardly knew in bars I could certainly not afford. This was neither the first, nor the last, but perhaps the worst or lowest nadir.

And then somebody on Mount Olympus must have told someone else that this wretched mortal had had enough of his juvenile *hubris* knocked out of him, at least for the time being. My English publisher informed me that he had every intention of publishing *The Iron Hoop*. More remarkable, Harold Strauss, who then worked for Alfred Knopf and had turned the book down, told me he had changed his mind. And, more astonishing to me even than a publisher changing his mind, suggested that instead of living in Flatbush and getting a job, I go to Capri and write a Life of Norman Douglas. Knopf and my English publisher, Cassell, would finance my wife's and my passage and give us enough to live on for about a year. Immediately I wrote to Norman: I bought all those books of his I had not read, or no longer possessed, together with a couple of books about him. In the New York Public Library, I was allowed after scrutiny of myself and my credentials, to enter a sort of underground cage in which were kept obscene books including his *Limericks* and, I think, his book about aphrodisiacs called *Paneros*. In fact, I did my research, received his approval, and a few weeks later my wife and I set off for Naples, steerage, in a semi-reconverted troop ship called the SS *Saturnia*. With us went our two standard poodles, but they travelled first class: there was no accommodation for thoroughbred dogs in the unreconverted third.

WHY HAD Norman Douglas, who was and for good reason extremely reticent about his past, agreed with such alacrity that I "write his life"? He had himself published such autobiographical fragments as he cared to give to the public long ago: *Looking Back* had first appeared in 1933. He would be eighty years old in that December of 1948, and for nearly half of his life his name had been involved in scandals that had made him a legendary figure. With the publication of *Late Harvest*, in 1946, he had, as he put it, "closed up his little shop", and had also said his final words about himself. Why, then, did he agree to this almost totally unknown writer digging about in his past? The answer, as I now see it, lay in part in his personality, in part in my own, but perhaps above all in our relationship.

We did not know one another very well, and indeed had met only quite recently, in late 1943 or early 1944, when the British authorities had permitted him to re-enter England (from Portugal), after some twenty-seven years of exile pending criminal prosecutions for pederasty in 1916. Of this, more later. He disliked England, and was anxious to return to Italy, from which country he had fled, for similar reasons, shortly before the War. As soon as he could obtain the permission of the new, post-War Italian authorities, he returned to Capri, the love of his youth and the site of *South Wind*, there to spend his last years. The late Kenneth MacPherson, though a homosexual, had married two millionairesses. The first of these, Bryher Ellerman, was herself a writer of great distinction and a friend of Norman's. She paid for the building of Kenneth's Villa Tuoro with the condition that a self-contained ground floor flat be provided for Norman. It was thither he had gone: it was there

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he lived, and it was there he died. He had no need or wish to write: yet it may be that he felt himself something of a ghost, a *revenant* being a more exact word: and it may also be that he felt a need to talk, not to sycophants nor to literary admirers, certainly not to male homosexuals whose effeminacy that most masculine of men disliked, while almost all his old friends were dead or far away. Perhaps that is why he wished me to come to Capri, even at the cost of my meddling in matters he would as soon leave alone. Maybe. . . .

For there were aspects of our relationship which appealed to him. We were related, by marriage. His wife, Elsa Fitz-Gibbon, had been not only his own first cousin, through her mother, but also my father's. His two sons were therefore my second cousins. One of these, Archie, I not only knew quite well but had also been able to assist in various small ways while living on Bermuda. For this, Norman was grateful. But, more important perhaps, if he were a *revenant* on Capri I by my name alone was in quite another way a *revenant* from his own early, tormented and tragic youth and marriage. Furthermore, I qualified as a member of the family, and was therefore acceptable, perhaps even trustworthy, much as he had distrusted and eventually hated his wife. "There is bad blood there," he once remarked to John Davenport about myself. But it was not, I think, my blood to which he was referring. In any case, to a Victorian aristocrat blood was blood, good or bad. "Never trust anyone," he used to say. Yet, if you must, a member of the family may be slightly more trustworthy. A very old man, no matter how clever or devoid of senility, will often revert to the yardsticks of his youth.

That, however, is not sufficient explanation. No more is the fact that he had read my first novel in typescript—in its unpublishable days—had written me a kind letter about it which I still have, and therefore knew that I was capable at least of putting respectable English sentences together. Many writers, far more skilled and of course infinitely better known than myself, would have been only too delighted to write about him. And one, at least, had already done so.

Richard Aldington, towards the end of his life, had become curiously embittered. Why this was, I do not know. Nancy Cunard, who had once been his lover, said that it was because he "had gone to Hollywood and become a fascist." Since I never met the man, I cannot contradict this, but since Nancy's own very considerable wits had become in some measure stupefied by Communism and the Plight of the Negro in the United States, I would suspect some other reason. Perhaps Aldington felt, and not without injustice, that his great talents as a writer had not received due recognition, that time and fashion had passed him by. Perhaps there were other reasons. In any event he was to write, if he had not already written, what can only be described as a bitchy book about T. E. Lawrence, an ill-documented attack on a dead man. More important, and this was known, he had written a similar book about Norman. Having every reason to fear Aldington's approach to his own life, Norman had let him know, through friends, that if the book were to be published during his, Norman's, lifetime he would sue Aldington for libel immedi-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ately and heavily. He must have known what was in *Pinorman* (which Aldington published in 1954, that is to say within two years of Douglas's death): he may even have seen a typescript. In any event, as he told me, he was anxious that an authoritative and authorised biography be in existence which would effectively spike Aldington's guns. He was too old and tired to write such a book himself: and I was, from his point of view, a sufficiently fresh and unpolluted stream into which he could, as the Russians say, empty his soul, or at least such parts of it as he regarded as fit for posterity.

Unpolluted? I certainly did not regard myself as such. A handful of love affairs, a certain knowledge of the literary world, complete tolerance as to the sexual habits of others, an international upbringing not dissimilar to his own, social self-confidence and a mind quite out of tune with that fashionable left-wing liberalism which he too despised as meretricious, I had two further advantages to him as his biographer. First of all, I was not homosexual, as were so many of his most fervent admirers. Secondly, I belonged to no sort of literary clique. (It was Norman who dismissed the ring-master of one such circus with the cruel remark that Cyril Connolly was not as nice as he looked.) Thirdly, I had been a soldier, much as he had been a diplomat, before becoming a writer. And, finally, I was a friend.

WHEN, TOWARDS THE END of the War, the news spread through London's literary circles, on the fringes of which I revolved, that he was coming to England it was received with a degree of amazement, in part explicable by the fact that London had been culturally isolated from the continent of Europe for so long, in part because he had been gone for so much longer and had become, in some measure, a myth. Undoubtedly Norman's reputation for evil had contributed to his enormous fame as a writer. In those days, and perhaps even today, there is an anti-social or at least an anti-bourgeois element among the intelligentsia. Byron's reputation had profited therefrom long ago; so had Wilde's; so were Scott Fitzgerald's and Dylan Thomas's to do in the immediate future. Of course they were all excellent writers as well, but scandal provided the icing to a cake already there. Heaven knows what they expected Norman to do or say when he arrived. It is certain, however, that he had no wish whatsoever to play the part for which they had cast him.

For if, to many of the London *literati*, he was an awesome and heroic curio from another age, to him battered, war-time London was a strange, grey city, a place of refuge *faute de mieux* where it was scarcely even possible to get anything decent to drink. This was not the city in which he had been literary editor of the *English Review* under Ford Madox Ford (and first published Robert Frost in England), where he had listened to Casals and Rubinstein play in Paul and Muriel Draper's drawing room, where he had immortalised the 1914 Cockney children's play in his *London Street Games*, where he had told his friend Joseph Conrad that Henry James wrote worse than Edith Wharton, "without even the excuse of being a woman." Growing deaf, poor, almost shabby, why should he care, in some noisy, crowded 1944 pub, what Brian Howard had wittily said about Stephen Spender? He wished to live like a gentleman, and with the help of friends he succeeded, but always there seemed to be some effeminate stranger, taking his elbow to help him across the blacked-out street. Angrily but politely he would shake off the helping hand. In the icy fog his nose grew red, so red he used to say that he could light his pipe by it.

Paradoxically, the British had thought to exile him for his sexual malpractices in 1916—it was Humbert Wolfe, the poet and civil servant, who tipped him off that he had better go—but it was London, some thirty years later, that became his place of exile. There were rooms of refuge from the atmosphere of the time, and from his self-appointed protectors, such as Mossy's afternoon drinking club called *The Ladder* in Bruton Mews and Viva King's "Sundays." He also found some surcease in work. But it was a wretched period, soon enough to be made even worse by the plague of Flying Bombs and other lethal Nuremberg toys.

I, OR RATHER MY WIFE, met him more or less by accident. He spoke to her in a bar, asked her name, and wished to meet me. The literary people who surrounded him either did not know me or regarded me, an American officer, as quite unsuitable for their own rather rarefied atmosphere. Nor did I know, until he told me, that we were related by marriage. And finally, though I had read some of his books with much pleasure, and was well aware of his great stature as a writer, I was not "a fan" and had really no

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

interest in his private life. However, I have always, I think, treated distinguished writers older than myself with a suitable respect. Nor was I a rarefied character. It was, I believe, for these reasons that we became friends. I, at least, took an immediate liking to him, and when I came home in the evening from my staff officer's job we frequently met. That he returned my friendship was soon obvious. When he gave me a Penguin copy of *Fountains in the Sand*, with apologies for the wretched production of that book and with the printer's numerous errors corrected in his own hand, he inscribed it "from Uncle Norman." Such, then, was our first relationship, but soon enough, in the summer of 1944, I was whisked away to the French Campaign and, later, to Washington. It was only when I was back in London, after the War and for a mere three months early in 1946, that I really got to know him.

HE WAS A TALL, ERECT OLD MAN, his fine white hair only slightly yellowed in places by the tobacco of his ever-burning pipe. He had never been an athlete, indeed he had all his life disliked athletics as much as have I, but he was very much an outdoor man. Had he not walked all over Calabria and western Austria and heaven knows where else? The tendency to fatness revealed by photographs taken in his middle age had quite vanished, and his physique was spare. His dress was sober, not at all Bohemian. He used to say that had he remained in the diplomatic corps he would have been enjoying an ambassador's pension. Many years before he had been a friend and neighbour of Lord Rosebery's. He could easily have passed as an ex-ambassador; at least until he began to speak, and perhaps even then.

His charm was immense, his courtesy old-fashioned. If it amused him to shock, he was very careful whom he shocked, for he did so to amuse and not to give pain. When bored he would fall silent and, later, quite unobtrusively disconnect his hearing aid. His wit is in his books, but it was also in his conversation, pungent, sensible above all; and when he indulged in the fantastic he never confused the fantasy with fact. He was, in the best sense of the word, the most masculine man I have ever known, with no need to flex his muscles either physically or mentally to prove it. In a word, he was enchanting company. He drank a lot—difficult in war-time London—but never, to my knowledge, lost his wits. Did he not himself write: "I can always tell when a man's drunk, even if I'm drunk myself"?

During those early months of 1946 I saw more of him. My military work was minimal by then, my principal occupation the closing up of my London flat in preparation to my departure (permanent, as I thought) for America. He would walk around in the mornings, tap on my window with his walking stick, and we would go out to a nearby pub. I recall that on one occasion I was sorting out my books, three piles, those few I was taking, those I was storing and those, the majority, I intended to sell.

"Selling any of mine?" he asked.

"I find I have two copies of *South Wind*. I'm selling one."

"Give me a pen. I'll sign it for you. It'll fetch more that way."

Next morning I was engaged once again upon this dreary task of sorting books, when I heard his tap.

"I think I had better sign some more of your books."

And he was writing:

"For my dear friend Thomas Hardy, with best regards, George Meredith." Or: *"Oscar, how dare you? Bosie."*

One I still have, a first edition of *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, thus inscribed, by him:

"For his dear Nephew, Const. FitzGibbon, hoping he will profit from this book, which I picked up quite by chance. From his uncle, Norman Douglas, 22 April 1936."

He was worried at this time by a certain giddiness in the mornings, "skuimpy" was the old-fashioned word he used. He was afraid that this was old age, but hoped that it might be, as he put it, his old syphilis coming back. (He had contracted that disease, he told me, in a hackney carriage, on the Albert Bridge, while coming back from the races in the '90s: the mercury cure in those days was long, painful and humiliating.) So he went off to Harley Street for a Wassermann test. He was, he later said to me, surely the only man who had ever taken a Wassermann test and been disappointed that the result was negative. Old age, that morning giddiness, nothing but old age. He did not like old age.

Yes, we were good friends. And when I sailed for America I wondered, sadly, if we would ever meet again. Certainly he would never cross the Atlantic. So far as he could understand, he said, America was nothing but a huge, perambulating

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lunatic asylum. More important, perhaps, to him: the Americans had pirated *South Wind*. For Capri, in the summertime, was a small, and perhaps not a perambulating, lunatic asylum.

SO WE SAILED FOR NAPLES in the bowels of SS *Saturnia*. Since our two standard poodles travelled first class we were allowed on to the upper deck to exercise them, and there we met Sinclair Lewis on his last trip to Europe, where he was to die after being cruelly parodied by Ernest Hemingway. In fact we spent most of our waking hours between meals with him in the first-class bar, and I recall a remark he made about such parodies, unaware that he was about to be the victim of the treatment. We were talking about the portrayal of Hugh Walpole in Somerset Maugham's *Cakes and Ale*.

"Hughie," he said, "was such a sweet little man, and utterly crushed by Willie's caricature. Quite unnecessary, too. A proper writer can roast his own brother so he won't notice it. I know. I have."

He shared Norman's dislike of Maugham. Pointing with his stick at a then disused hotel on Capri, Norman once said to me:

"Willie Maugham used to come here every autumn with his friends, to hold a Sods' Congress. Revolting people."

It was fun, listening to "Red" in the bar of the *Saturnia*. He was relaxed, as people tend to be at sea, with his last emotional crisis behind him. As we steamed up the Italian coast, we passed a headland surmounted by a ruined castle.

"The last time I saw that castle," he said, "I was with my wife, Dorothy Thompson. She told me when it was built, and who by, and how much the workmen had been paid, and it was not enough. An exhausting woman to travel with."

He was modest, too. He asked me to convey his respectful greetings to Norman Douglas "though he will certainly never have heard of me." Not bad, I thought, coming from a man who had won the Nobel Prize for Literature.

NAPLES HAD ALMOST COMPLETED its rebuilding after enormous war-time destruction. (When informed a few months later that the British Council had sent a man to lecture the Neapolitans on how to build houses, while London still lay largely in ruins, Norman was incensed. "Teach the Italians how to build houses! Why, the Italians were building houses when the British were still hanging from their hands in trees painted blue!") Italy had not gone Communist in the recent elections, in some measure due to massive intervention on the part of the Roman Catholic hierarchy through its priests. But we had heard dire warnings about the continued economic chaos in Italy, where it was said, in New York, that cigarettes were still a more valid currency than paper money. We had therefore smuggled in several thousand Chesterfields when we landed on November 1. That fact, and that date, were to be of some significance. While Alfred A. Knopf Inc. had paid our passage, my debts and other travel expenses, this had eaten up the American advance. The British advance from Cassell's was to be in the bank for me on Capri when I arrived there.

Norman was awaiting us at the top of the *funiculare* and took us immediately to Giorgio's café. That was not its name, but the name of the agreeable headwaiter, and it was there he liked to sit, particularly in the mornings, for it was off the piazza and commanded a fine view of both arrivals and departures from and to the Marina Grande, the island's only port, far below. And that very first evening he told me he was delighted that I was to write his life, but added:

"You can say anything you like about me, provided it is the truth. But I don't know how you're going to get around Alec."

Now "Alec" is not the name he gave me, but the real name was equally meaningless to me that evening. Indeed I never did get around "Alec", which is why the book was never finished and therefore why I am writing this now. All that lay in the future. Norman had reserved us a pleasant room, with a balcony, at a pension called the Floridiana. He assumed we would wish to rent a small house once we had had a look round. And we had a convivial dinner with him and Kenneth and Kenneth's friend in a restaurant which I do not recall ever visiting again.

Norman dined out most nights, frequently with us and usually, with or without our company or that of others, at a more modest establishment named the Savoia. Here he paid his bill monthly and always insisted on buying his own meal and wine. ("I don't like things grudgingly given," he would say with a twinkle. It was his firm conviction that nobody really cares to pay for anyone else's food. Perhaps he was right.) At the end of the meal the wine still in Norman's carafe would be weighed, and the same quantity produced at his next meal, a sensible Italian habit

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and one that admirably suited his own Scottish frugality in money matters. And at the end of the month, when the time came to pay the bill, he would carefully tot up every item in the bundle of papers. Not, he said, that Ciro, the waiter, would rob him, but *they do make mistakes*. And indeed they always had, whenever I was present at the little ceremony, and always in Norman's favour. Nevertheless he paid the bill as corrected by himself, perhaps a somewhat self-defeating act of Aberdeen canniness. He did not care for expensive restaurants nor, I think, the sort of people one usually sees in such places—not that he had any objection to their being "robbed, starved, and poisoned." I recall one such person inviting him to luncheon, or maybe lunch, at an expensive Neapolitan restaurant and saying, with the exquisite vulgarity that Norman recognised quicker than most: "You can have anything you ask for." "In that case I shall have a roast golden pheasant, stuffed with truffles. . . ." He, who had known St Petersburg as a diplomat long ago, once remarked that whereas most rich people stuff truffles into quails, the Dolgoruki family had persons scouring Europe in search of truffles so large that the quail might be imbedded therein. He was not, in fact, easily impressed by riches or, perhaps, by anything else. He and the Duc de la Rochefoucauld might well have got along very well together.

ITALY, in 1948, probably contained less foreigners than at any modern time before or since. The Armies had gone, the tourists were waiting. The French did not travel much in those days. The Germans were still confined within their own new revised frontiers. The Americans came, but mostly in the summertime. The British Labour government only allowed its citizens a minimum of foreign exchange, perhaps enough for a good week-end in Paris, and of course there was nobody from Russia or Russian-occupied territories. Capri belonged essentially to the Capresi and to rich Italians. This was not altogether a happy situation.

Shortly before my arrival, and before the election, a rich young Italian prince, *nobilissimo*, an archetypal hippy with his drugs and his Mercury-winged sandals, had organised an eating competition in the Capri *piazza*. A sum of money would go to the man who downed the greatest quantity of spaghetti within a specified time. The poor, of course, competed in this disgusting spectacle. According to Norman, this vile show had won the Italian Communist Party the sixty-odd votes that they polled on the island.

Owing to the British currency regulations my money had not in fact arrived on Capri. Later the British abroad were to use these currency regulations in order to plead poverty and, on occasion, to swindle the Italians. But at that time a telegram from London, assuring me that the money would be released almost immediately, satisfied the Capresi. I rented the Casa Solatia, with no down payment, from the charming Contessa Delafeld, who understood my predicament, and we moved out of the Floridiana, again without settling our bill and again with the benevolent agreement of its owner. We engaged a daily maid, Concetta, who lived next door to the Casa Solatia, and we opened accounts with butchers and bakers though not, I think, candlestick makers.

The Casa Solatia was not a small house. The drawing-room was enormous and belonged on a *piano-nobile*. With its tiled floor it was extremely cold, and a wood fire was needed, day and night, in the wintertime. It was olive wood that we burned, though I have never understood who cuts down olive trees nor why, and even if we were somewhat spoiled by the cedarwood fires of Bermuda, it still smelled delicious. I worked upstairs, in a room that was almost all glass and caught every ray of winter sunshine.

It was a most comfortable house which, Norman told me, had once belonged to his friend Maxim Gorky. My wife once found a holy medal with Russian lettering the size of an imperial five-*kopek* coin wedged at the back of a drawer. It was there that Norman had visited Gorky on, I think, the Russian's sixtieth birthday. Gorky then had had two, alternating wives, one French one Russian, one for the summer and the other for the winter. The wife of the moment had told Norman that her husband was upstairs, in the bathroom. Norman had found the author of *The Lower Depths*, stark naked and looking at his brown, barrel-chested self in the glass, and saying to himself with satisfaction:

"Thirty-five books, one-hundred-and-eight women, and today sixty years old. Not bad!"

And it was to Gorky that the then Mayor of Capri, the *Sindaco*, had complained about yet another suicide by a foreigner on the island:

"It gets the place a bad name. Why will they not buy a ticket to the mainland? The cost, after all, is trifling."

The Mayor of Capri in my time was Dr Edwin

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Cerio and had been for many years. He was an old friend of Norman's and it was he, I think, who had given him honorary citizenship (the only other man so honoured then being Benedetto Croce, though I do not believe the two had ever met). This may have been due in part to his scholarly and less scholarly writings about the island: in part to the fairly extensive afforestations he had carried out there very early in the century, long before ecology was fashionable. Perhaps it was Cerio, too, who had caused the highest mountain, up in Anacapri, to be named or re-named Monte Mackenzie, though Compton Mackenzie's two novels about the island, *Vestal Fire* and *Extraordinary Women*, can scarcely have done more for the island's reputation than the bangs of the suicidal revolvers. However, and from a Capresi point of view, they were in the direct tradition of the Tiberian legends, from which the inhabitants have now profited so greatly for some two millennia.

Indeed that legend needs constant refurbishing. When I was there an unfinished building intended as a sort of gymnasium, I understood, for Mussolini's baby Fascists, the *Balilla*, was falling into ruins. Already the guides were pointing it out to tourists with the sinister gestures and intonations of which only an Italian guide is capable: *"Tiberio!"*

So we moved into the Casa Solatia, which is on the Via Mulo, an old mule track as its name indicates, but now paved in steps and leading down steeply to the Marina Piccola, the island's principal rocky bathing place in the summertime, complete with bar-restaurant and mahogany-coloured beach boys to impress, and perhaps with luck to rob, the foreign ladies. That winter, though not at the Marina Piccola for the ladies had not arrived and the bar-restaurant was still closed, I met Norman's Capri friends, very few, and all residents or semi-residents.

THERE WAS Cecil Gray, the musicologist, with whom I was later to share a house in Anacapri. His wife had recently died, and he was a sad man, but a witty and a learned one. I once asked Robert Helpmann what exactly a musicologist is. His reply was that "if you wished to know about Renaissance Florentine painting you went to Bernhard Berenson: if you wished to know about music, you went to Cecil. . . ." I remember once hearing Norman ask him if there ever were a famous homosexual composer. Cecil replied, in his slow and ponderous voice: "There's Tchaikovsky. And of course Benji—if you call him a composer. . . ." Norman's own musical taste—he had been taught the piano by old Artur Rubinstein—was of his period, Brahms above all. He was really pre-Wagnerian and had a sort of contempt for Verdi, who was then very fashionable once more. He said, I remember, that the Italians did not really love music; what they loved was noise. And there, I think, spoke the man who was not only Scottish but also Austrian.

And there was Arthur Johnson, an English international lawyer, formerly of Paris, but then of Rome, with a house on Capri. Norman had no love for lawyers as such, nor need he, but Arthur was not as such. In Paris, before the First World War, he had known the creators of the modern movement in art, in the distant days when it was in fact modern. He had been, in his Paris period, a close friend of Guillaume Apollinaire, whose widow indeed I once met when she was visiting Arthur in his Anacapri house. He told me a story (I hope I have remembered it correctly), of being with Max Jacob when Apollinaire arrived in a state of high excitement bearing a recent purchase. This was an African figurine, a distorted female, maybe a goddess or a fertility symbol, its sexual and mammalian organs grossly exaggerated, its hands clenched at its sides, an expression which to a European would be one of extreme malignity on its black face. This they admired in ecstatic silence. At last Max Jacob said that they must immediately show it to Pablo Picasso. Picasso in those days still spoke French with a strong Spanish accent, pronouncing for instance the final S in *plus* even when no liaison was needed.

For a long time Picasso contemplated the figurine in silence. At last Jacob could not restrain himself:

"Est-ce n'est pas beau? Est-ce n'est pas aussi beau que la Venus de Milo?"

Again after a long silence Picasso said:

"*Est* plus *beau.*"

"And that," Arthur told me, "started something."

Norman, however, had no interest in the "modern movement" or, I think, in the plastic arts as such, at least, later than the *cinquecento.* At least I do not recall him talking about painters or sculptors, nor any whom he had numbered among his friends. And in his books I remember only the famous faun in *South Wind.* On the other hand in one of his many digs at D. H.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Lawrence he referred to him (in the preface to *Venus in the Kitchen*) as "a Mr D. H. Lawrence, an English painter." Lawrence had of course asked for trouble by calling Norman, in *Sea and Sardinia,* "a bottle-nosed pseudo-gentleman." The dangers of attacking people like Norman Douglas in print do not need to be stressed.

And then there was the Baron Schack, always referred to as such. When I once suggested that we call each other by our Christian names, for we knew one another very well, he thought for a while before saying:

"You may call me Schack."

He came of a very old and very grand Prussian family, too old and too grand to bother about a *von* or desire a more imposing title. He had held a colonel's commission in the German Imperial Mounted Lifeguards, the *Leibcürassiers,* of whom it was said: "What more could a man desire than to be Kaiser, Pope, or a *Leibcürassier*?" Disgusted by the German revolution of 1918, he had emigrated to Capri where he had lived ever since in increasing poverty. He looked the very epitome of the Prussian officer, shaven bullet head, sabre-scars and all, and was immensely tall. However within that great carcase, which he dressed each year on the Kaiser's birthday in cuirass and plumed dress-helmet, to drink the Kaiser's health, there lived a soul as gentle as a flower. Indeed he collected the orchids that grow wild in the remoter parts of Capri, and knew more about them than anyone else. It was this sort of specialised knowledge, particularly in the fields of botany, zoology and ornithology, that most appealed to Norman Douglas. Norman's first two papers, written and published in German while he was still a boy, were, I believe, on ornithological subjects, and he thought so highly of his *Herpetology of the Grand Duchy of Baden* that he reprinted it many years later. What he disliked talking about were woolly generalities, metaphysics, pseudo or even real philosophy, and the like. His heritage from the ancient world was in many ways more that of Rome than of Greece (he had spent surprisingly little time in Greece), though his *Birds and Beasts of the Greek Anthology* is surely as scholarly as it is delightful. But it was the birds and beasts he liked, and I remember his making some rude remarks (which I have unfortunately forgotten) about Socrates "and all that lot of chatterers." Hence, perhaps, the basis of his affection for the Baron Schack, who was certainly no chatterer. Indeed, like many people who have lived long abroad, he had half-forgotten his native tongue without really mastering another. Once, when he was trying and failing to express something to me, I suggested he speak in German.

"*Ach!*" he said, "*J'ai dimenticato mein German.*"

Schack was also a very brave man. In the 1930s, the Nazi period, Goering had paid a visit to Mussolini and had expressed a wish to see Capri. (It was not a success. Lord Tredegar had the next suite at the Hotel Quisisana, and Tredegar's monkey bit the Field Marshal's nose.) In preparation for this visit the Nazi authorities arranged that a party of German residents be at the Marina Grande to welcome the portly air ace when he stepped ashore. Colonel Baron Schack being the senior member, as it were, of the German colony was asked to head this welcoming committee. Now Schack had no more time for the Nazis than he had had for the "Sozis" (*i.e.* Social Democrats). He therefore replied that he, Colonel Baron Schack, remembered Captain Goering from World War days. Unfortunately a prior engagement made it impossible for him to be at the Marina Grande on the day proposed. However he would be delighted to receive Captain Goering, at his pension, any Wednesday afternoon between the hours of four and five, and remained etc. etc. To this he added a post-script. As a professional Prussian officer he had long wondered how a man might rise from the rank of Captain to that of Field Marshal in peace-time. Perhaps somebody could be so good as to enlighten him.

Norman quite rightly regarded this letter, from an impoverished foreigner living in Fascist Italy, as an act of great moral courage. It was also the sort of gesture of which he thoroughly approved.

THERE WERE OTHER FRIENDS, of course, and countless acquaintances quite apart from transients, so that he was constantly doffing his blue beret as he progressed across the piazza. There were quite a few former Fascist dignitaries living on Capri, of whom Edda Ciano, Mussolini's daughter, was the most prominent. But with these Norman had little if anything to do: he did not like Fascists, maintaining that all they had ever done for Italy, apart from losing a war, was to number every single house in the peninsula, including churches and ruins.

AND SO, in the comfort approaching luxury of Solatia, I settled down to work. Slowly the bills mounted, for despite all my entreaties

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

my London publisher could not get my advance past the British authorities. In some ways even more annoying were the repeated assurances that I should receive it "next week", which prevented me from hunting about elsewhere for cash. It was now that the smuggled cigarettes were such a blessing. Food and wine I could get on credit; the Contessa Delafeld was kind and understanding, the man from the Floridiana less so: Concetta had little need of cash, and when Signor Douglas explained my predicament to her in her native Capresi dialect, she even surreptitiously smuggled produce from her husband's little garden into our kitchen. But cigarettes were another matter. In Italy cigarettes, like salt and stamps, are *monopolio,* that is to say can only be sold legally by the state, and state tobacconists do not give credit, while black marketeers of course always insist on cash. Slowly the smuggled mountain began to shrink.

THEN A FRIEND OF MINE turned up, from army days in London. Peter Elder taught, and I think still teaches, Greek at Harvard. It is perhaps some measure of his youthful eccentricity that he chose to devote a lengthy period of research to Greek inscriptions on Capri, of all places. I repeatedly asked him if he had found any, and was as regularly fobbed over with a non-committal reply. He and Norman got on well. More important from my point of view, he had cash and he lent me some.

I recall an outing to the site of Frederick Barbarossa's castle, on a cliff edge in Anacapri. The last part of the climb was stiff, and Peter and I left Norman with a bottle of wine in Minghetti's café. Peter went right to the edge of the cliff, a sheer drop of several hundred feet; but I, who suffer slightly from vertigo, hung back. Later Norman said to me:

"He went right to the cliff's edge?"

I nodded.

"How much did you say you owed him?"

"About a hundred thousand lire."

"And you just stood there, behind him?"

Thus did it amuse him to shock. But never to hurt, or at least never by accident. Thus in his fragmentary autobiography, *Looking Back,* under the heading "Muriel Draper" he says that he cannot (or at least in 1933 could not) tell the story of the wood ashes. Muriel however had told me the story in New York, and he agreed that I might use it; so before it is lost, here it is.

During the First World War Muriel found herself pregnant and did not desire another baby at that time. On the other hand she was reluctant to entrust herself to the illegal and dangerous abortionists of the day. With her husband's approval she asked Norman for his advice. He gave it to her, at length.

There was, he said, a method used to that day by peasant women in Sicily, a method that could be traced back to the Court of Byzantium, painless, certain, and safe. It involved wood ash. The ash had to come from a specific type of oak—I forget its botanical name—which grows profusely in the Mediterranean area, but is less easily come by in northern climates. However he knew of a fairly extensive stand on the property of a friend and would give Paul Draper an introduction to its owner, for a fair amount of wood was needed.

The procedure was comparatively simple. Once the wood had been reduced to ash, the woman sat in a bath or tub, with ash up to her waist. To this, water, as hot as she could stand, was constantly added for a period of some three hours. She must then retire to bed and next morning, *hey presto!* no baby. Since the ash had a certain soporific effect, the induced miscarriage was less painful than a normal one, particularly at so early a stage. He explained the chemical-biological reasons for this, and for the effect upon the embryo. He quoted Byzantine sources, which clearly referred to this process. It seemed probable that the Empress Theodora had herself employed it, before her marriage to Justinian. He described, from first-hand experience, the attitude of the Sicilian priesthood to what was not, after all, an illegal operation. Similarly in English law it would not be a crime nor even a tort, as the law against abortion—which he quoted—clearly showed.

So Paul Draper obtained the oak and for a week or more there were fires burning day and night in their Thurloe Square house. Since this was midsummer, and the blazing fires must look odd, they sent the servants on holiday. They even drew the blinds and pretended that the house was closed up.

Meanwhile Muriel made her own preparations for the lengthy ordeal. From an antique shop she bought a bath shaped like a shoe, the sort in which Marat was murdered. She decided to invite a few friends—the antique bath was put in the drawing-room—and since she would be quite decently dressed from the waist up while invisible below, believed that her reputation for mild eccentricity was such and the tactfulness of her

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

friends so proven, that she would not be asked any awkward question as to why she was receiving them in this unorthodox fashion. To make sure that everything went smoothly, she laid in an ample supply of a really excellent champagne.

The evening, she told me, passed off extremely well. Norman was there of course, and Henry James and one or two more. Casals played the 'cello, accompanied on the piano by Rubinstein. Rose Bertin designed her a hat. From time to time her husband would appear with a jug of very hot water which was unobtrusively added to the bath. At last Norman pulled out his watch, nodded to Paul, and he and the other guests departed.

Next morning there was a tap on the front door. Since there were no servants, Muriel answered it herself. It was Norman. He said:

"I wonder if there is any of that excellent champagne left?"

She fetched a bottle, and filled their glasses in the drawing-room where the blinds were no longer drawn. At last Norman leaned forward in his chair.

"Well?" he asked. "Did it work?"

"No."

And then, she told me, he did something she had never seen him do before or since. He laughed and laughed and laughed. He laughed so hard that he nearly spilt his champagne. Fénelon, when asked by a young lady if he never laughed, replied that he laughed almost all the time but never made that ah-hah-hah noise. Norman was such another: his rare laughter was a single, loud, joyous *"Hah!"*, but on this occasion he really rocked and roared and had to wipe his eyes.

And the result of his elaborate practical joke is a very famous dancer.

NOW THIS STORY of the wood ashes is, I hope, very funny. But there is a more sententious aspect to it. So great was Norman's love of life that the killing of an unborn child would have been for him a repulsive act unless it were really essential. Not on moral grounds—he had no morals in that sense—let alone on legal ones, but simply because he loved life, and the fuller the better. It was this that seemed so shocking to the Victorians and the immediate post-Victorians. It was this that lay behind such aphorisms of his as: "Let there be no virgins in the land!" If I have recounted this anecdote at such length it is, I think, because it tells a great deal about him, and therefore about his books.

THE METHOD OF WORK we had devised, and which still seems to me in retrospect theoretically excellent, was as follows. In the mornings I would write. Apart from the sacred hour of the *siesta*, I would spend the afternoons with Norman. Our conversation would give me enough to work on next morning. When the first draft of each chapter was typed, I would show it to him and he would correct any errors of fact and suggest any misinterpretation of these that might have occurred to him. The evenings were left open. By this method, and at the rate I work, we estimated that the whole operation would take some six months.

So we would set off, Norman and I, to a remote wine shop, quite unvisited by tourists, called the Arco Naturale. It was a long walk, the second half along an earthen track better adapted to the hooves of goats than to the feet of men. It was well worth the walk. As its name implies, it was a natural cave and little more, with a couple of tables to one side. In front of us and across the water lay the mountains and tip of the Sorrentine Peninsula, upon which fell the rays of the afternoon and later of the setting sun. It was a place of extreme natural beauty, and we almost always had it to ourselves. The wine was cheap and rough but excellent, the real Capresi from grapes grown by the husband of the woman who served it, not the muck from the nearby island of Ischia which, in those days, was called *Tiberio*, labelled "made in Capri" and sold at exorbitant prices to foreigners. There were *bambini*, who deserved a sip of wine, maybe an orange, occasionally a very small banknote, for there were then no current coins of any value—even the small banknotes were still often grimy old pieces of paper issued for the armies of occupation.

There we sat for bottle after bottle. Occasionally a hunter, a *cacciatore* to be more exact, would pass on his homeward way from shooting birds, almost always sparrow-sized birds, finches and the like. Norman usually asked to see the day's bag. Usually sparrows. Once a hoopoe, once, I think to remember, a rock-creeper. "They will soon be extinct here," he remarked, with neither gloom nor amazement, for it was a sad statement of fact, and nothing more. So, too, was a remark he once made to me: "I wish you had known me when I was younger. I am only a husk, these days." There was no self-pity in it,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nor did he expect or get a denial from me. He did not seem "a husk", but then I had never known him except in his old age. The man I knew was excellent company, witty and informative, if anything sometimes almost too strenuous for me, fifty years his junior. So there we sat, and there we talked until the shadows rose up the flanks of the mountains across the water. Or rather he talked while I listened and occasionally asked a question.

I AM NO Boswell. I wish I had even taken notes, though I am sure that he would, quite rightly, have resented such an intrusion between friends. He told me much, a great deal not already committed to paper, about himself, about his family, both the Austrian and the Scottish sides, about his childhood and education, about his time as a diplomat in St Petersburg and elsewhere and the Russian scandal, involving a lady of the Imperial Court, which had led to his withdrawal, his being placed *en disponibilité* and his consequent resignation from the Foreign Office. He told me about his financial status as a young man, the part owner of cotton mills in Austria, and how foolishly these had been sold and his wealth squandered. All that is in the first three chapters of my unfinished book (the typescripts of which, as corrected by him, are now in the library of the University of Texas). They do not add a great deal to what he himself had written. Furthermore, on re-reading them before I made the sale, I found my style queerly distorted and I realised that so greatly had I been influenced by him that I had, unconsciously and unsuccessfully, attempted to ape his own. Well, a young writer could learn from many a worse master; but still, those chapters do not read well.

There was a fourth chapter, also corrected in his own hand, which I lent to John Davenport when he was commissioned to finish the Biography. He lost it, and there is no copy, though I have little doubt that it is now in some American library or among a private collector's treasures. I know of no copy in existence. It deals with his marriage, a subject about which he never wrote himself and which he discussed with me hesitantly.

Briefly, he and his first cousin had been adolescent lovers. (In this context he liked to say: "Charity begins at home!", but he was referring to his sister.) After the syphilis and the St Petersburg disasters he came home, to the Vorarlberg, and there married Elsa FitzGibbon. They had set up house, on a grand scale, upon the Posilipo near Naples and had travelled widely. Together they had written a book of short stories, his first book though he admitted that most of the text was hers, which was published over the pseudonym of "Normyx." Some of these stories he later republished as his own. ("I never could think up plots," he said, "but fortunately I came upon a manual of plots, called *Plotto*—most helpful. But that was much later, when I was writing stories for Caradoc Evans.") She bore him two sons, Archie who was my friend (and who was a carbon copy, but a very faded one, of his father) and Robin. Together Norman and Elsa went to Ceylon, at the time of the Boxer Rising. There she had a love affair with an Austrian officer who was en route to China, and Norman always had his doubts about Robin's paternity. It was the beginning of the end. The cotton mills had gone, or were going. The house on the Posilipo had to go too. Elsa was soon suing him for divorce, but he availed himself of his Scottish nationality to avoid the English courts and retain custody of his children, whom he whisked away from Capri and consigned, Archie to Joseph Conrad, Robin to another friend, I believe a London academic. Many years later (at about the time of the wood ashes story) Elsa Douglas was burned to death, in a hotel fire, in Munich. Shortly before her death she had dined, in that city, with Sir Roger Casement, himself on his way to a U-boat, and Ireland, and death by hanging in England.

NORMAN WAS BITTER, very bitter, about her.

"There is nothing," he said, "that the Almighty has devised which I could not have devised better. But as for that woman's death, I must hand it to Him."

I asked him if he had a photograph of her. "No," he replied brusquely, "I burned all of them too."

Yet a few days later he found one; a beautiful, haughty, blonde young woman. And before I left Capri, Arthur Johnson told me a story which was certainly not in that "lost" chapter.

While I was in Rome that summer, Norman had re-visited Ischia. "My last visit to Ischia," he had told Arthur, "and as usual I shall take only one book." It was on Ischia that he and Elsa had spent their honeymoon. When he was back on Capri, Arthur visited him, and Norman gave him the book as a souvenir. Arthur put it in his pocket without more than a cursory glance. Bound in red morocco, with hearts down the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

spine, it was a copy of Benjamin Constant's *Adolphe,* that most bitter book about Constant's love affair with Madame de Staël. And it was inscribed from Elsa to Norman "on our honeymoon." Surely the strangest of books for a bride to give her groom: stranger yet, perhaps, that he should have taken it with him on his "last visit" to Ischia or indeed that he should have preserved it at all. It lifts a corner of the curtain. For I never did "get around Alec."

As I SAY, I made few notes (and those I no longer have) of our conversations. Furthermore, after several bottles of wine, when the sun was setting across the water and only the peaks were still lit, Norman would say:

"Ha! Time for a drink."

We would make our way, rather slowly, back to the village, to the Piazza at this hour, and Norman would order two large dry martinis. These would be sent back, untasted, with instructions that they be made with English gin. After a few minutes the drinks, the same drinks I have no doubt, would be set before us. And so the evening began. Is it surprising that next morning my memory of what had been said was impaired, that I too tended to feel "skuimpy", and that the book took much longer to write than I had anticipated? Perhaps he really wished it to be that way.

For as winter became spring the continued failure of my money to materialise had long ceased to be a joke. Credit was exhausted, even the mountain of cigarettes had vanished into smoke, and the Contessa Delafeld was not unnaturally asking not only for her back rent but also for double rent during the summer season.

And then the money did arrive, and I paid all my bills, and I was almost broke again. My wife went to Rome, to find film work. I rented a much cheaper, and far more remote, house in Anacapri, which I shared with Cecil Gray (he having the top floor, I the ground). It began to be almost intolerably hot, too hot for work, certainly far too hot to "get around Alec." Capri was becoming a twenty-four hour outdoor night-club, and Norman was forever pointing out pretty girls to whom, he suggested quite frankly, that my attention be better devoted than to his own distant past. Our visits to the Arco Naturale became rarer, sessions on the Piazza longer.

The reason why it was so important to "get around Alec" was complex, and my concern perhaps somewhat ingenuous. Essentially it involved chronology. Towards the middle of the century's first decade Norman Douglas, then aged about forty, found his life in ruins. Not only had he no career and practically no money left, but on top of at least two sexual misfortunes with women—the Albert Bridge and St Petersburg—had come the hideous, one might well say the traumatic, disaster of his broken marriage and divorce, in a period when divorce in Europe was still a disgrace or at least an admission of supreme private failure. He became, and remained, a pederast. Far more important from my point of view was the fact that he then also began to write seriously. Finally, as I have already said, the scandal of his private life was common knowledge in a wide circle, had led to his expulsion from two countries, and had added the quality of notoriety to that of well-deserved fame. Surely, I thought, there must be some connection between the almost simultaneous change in both his public and his private life.

I asked him why he had become a writer. His answer was straightforward, as usual, and honest. In those days a writer of American best-sellers named Marion Crawford had been living at Sorrento, and living high. Norman knew and liked the man, though he found his books very poor stuff, and had gone with him on Crawford's yacht to Elba. It was, he said, during this trip that he had reached a conclusion: if an amiable fool like Crawford could make so much money out of books, surely he, Norman, could do better. From my own experiences on Bermuda I should perhaps have accepted this explanation. However, I had not then been fully weaned from the misleading popularisations of the Viennese analyst, and I looked for a deeper connection, which I never found.

Secondly, this pederasty in a way bewildered me. Though quite capable of conceiving of such a perversion, I was not capable of empathy. I could not, as the Americans were even then beginning to say, "identify." In no circumstances could I imagine myself wishing to have a physical, sexual relationship with a pre-adolescent child, male or female. Nor have I changed in this respect, but I can now, as I could not then, grasp the significance of two clues, no doubt two among many, that Norman gave me. One was:

"Up to the age of twelve most children can see, for their eyes are fresh. After the age of about thirty-five a few people can think. In the years between they are quite uninteresting, except to one another."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The other was: "No boy I have cared for has failed to profit from our relationship."

This was a reference to "Alec", by then a senior civil servant, happily married and with children of his own. And it must be stressed now —as it could hardly be then—that so far as I could make out Norman's sexual relations with boys were sexual play, not a perversion of the sexual act. I think that he quite genuinely failed to see anything wrong in what he had done, and ascribed the punishments and notoriety from which he had suffered to the cruel stupidity of the society into which he had been born. This explanation, which I believe now to be true, accounts for much of the acrimony with which he attacked that society in his *How about Europe?* published in America with the title *Good-bye to Western Culture* (1930, written therefore before the Great Depression, and when Western Culture seemed to be on the up and up). His own morality—if such be the word, a word he would not have used—was based upon a real hatred of cruelty, hypocrisy, and lost fulfilment. He called it common sense. Nowadays few would say he was entirely wrong. This does not mean that I would have then—nor would I now—entrust any pre-adolescent child of my own to his care. Who would, save for gain? And needless to say he was more than once the victim of blackmail.

He paid heavily for his tastes. The "Alec" scandal lost him the friendship of Joseph Conrad, which was perhaps the one he prized most. For this, however, he did not blame Conrad, but Mrs Conrad, whom he described as a "prig and a prude." He even forgave Conrad a remark in his posthumously published letters, though he pretended to be offended by it. Norman had contracted malaria, had gone to the Conrads' with a high temperature, and Conrad had written to Galsworthy—I quote through Norman's and my own memories: "Douglas has arrived, very sick. I think he is going to die. In which case I suppose I shall have to bury him." No, it was Mrs Conrad whom he blamed, and through her women generally, for though he had many women friends, as he had had many women lovers, he became increasingly a misogynist.

THE CURIOUS TITLE of Aldington's book *Pinorman*

THE AUTHOR WITH NORMAN DOUGLAS *(1949)*

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is a telescoping of his name with that of Pino Orioli, a Florentine who shared Norman's sexual tastes and published the private editions of Norman's books. (Norman was extremely angry when a pirated edition of his *Limericks* came publicly on sale: private jokes, he said to me, are not intended for the marketplace.) Orioli "wrote" a couple of volumes of memoirs. Norman helped him with these, and the best passages are easily traceable to Norman's pen. But Orioli also wrote two extremely obscene attacks on women, which have not been published but which I have seen. The most violent passages are inked over, presumably by Norman, but are still legible. Orioli was a good business partner and, I am told, a man of some charm, but in associating with him Norman was getting uncomfortably close to the gutters of pornography.

To conclude with this matter of his pederasty, there is an anecdote concerning a luncheon party in Florence, in the 'twenties. When Norman left the party, Reggie Turner, Oscar Wilde's somewhat treacherous friend, remarked:

"On occasions when other men visit a jeweller's shop, Norman buys a toy train."

All that was one aspect of "getting around Alec." Another of course, in those distant days, was not only the fear of giving gross offence to the public but, more important, to Norman's sons, my own second cousins. It was, as I have said, in some measure because of our relationship that Norman trusted me, and I would not betray that trust. Had the general climate of opinion not changed so drastically I would not be writing this now, but he had also said: "You can write anything you like about me, so long as it's the truth."

FINALLY, THERE IS a word that must be said about his religious beliefs. He was called an atheist, and may even have said so about himself. Brought up between the strict Presbyterianism of Aberdeen and the almost equally strict Roman Catholicism, at least among servants and nurses, of the Vorarlberg, he found the semi-paganism of the superstitious south Italians *simpatico*. Yet he had a sort of private vendetta against Jesus Christ, not dissimilar to Swinburne's: *"Thou hast conquered, O pale Galilean, and the world has grown grey from thy breath."* For instance he referred to Christ, more than once, as "the poisonous ghost." Yet he was frightened of dying, I know, and though he never said so I think he was also frightened of what might then happen. What really clever man is not?

As for the Christian religion, it amused him, as his essay on *Flying Monks,* written in his wittiest scholarly manner, shows. I remember once, when Graham Greene (whom he liked) had left our table at Giorgio's to take the *funiculare* on his way to see Father Pio of the stigmata, Norman remarking in a loud voice, while Graham was still within earshot:

"Imagine a great big grown-up man going in for sin."

The remark seemed irrelevant to Graham's mission, but for Norman so might one "go in" for funny hats, or elastic-sided boots—or little boys. No, there was nothing in religious precepts to quell Norman's indulgences in what others, though not he, regarded as unnatural pleasures. And yet, and yet. . . .

In fact I could no more "get around Alec" than a biographer of Oscar Wilde could get around Lord Alfred Douglas. In something very close to despair I left for Rome. (I hated that marvellous city, because of my failure on Capri; indeed I have never willingly lived in any city since.) With the financial assistance of a kind friend, I returned to Capri, determined to finish my book. I could not.

At last Norman said to me:

"There are times, my boy, when one has no choice, as the Persians say, but to put one's trust in God."

I left for London, where I arrived with precisely two pence in my pocket, leaving my wife in Rome. No doubt, I thought, as the train drew in to Victoria Station on a cold, damp, December morn, no doubt London has its own equivalent of Flatbush.

I never saw Norman again.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Robert Graves

Five Poems

Ours is no wedlock

Ours is no wedlock, nor could ever be:
We are more, dear heart, than free.
Evil surrounds us—love be our eye-witness—
Yet while a first childish togetherness
Still links this magic, all terror of lies
Fades from our still indomitable eyes:
We love, and none dares gibe at our excess.

Song: Seven fresh years

Two full generations
Had parted our births
Yet still I could love you
Beyond all concealment,
All fear, all reproach,
Until seven fresh years
Ruling distance and time
Had established our truth.

Love brooded undimmed
For a threatening new age,
So we travelled together
Through torment and error
Beyond jealousy's eras
Of midnight and dawn,
Until seven fresh years
Ruling distance and time
Had established our truth.

Earlier lovers

First came fine words softening our souls for magic,
Next came fine magic, sweetening hope with sex;
Lastly came love, training both hearts for grief—
Magical grief that no honour could vex.

Was it ever granted earlier true lovers—
Whether equally bruised need not concern us—
To anticipate such hand-in-hand conformity?
If so, how were they named? And was their glory
Fixed by an oath you never dared deny me?

A charm for sound sleeping

A charm for sound sleeping,
A charm against nightmares,
A charm against death—
Without rhyme, without music,
Yet short of deceit?

How to master such magic
How acquire such deep knowledge,
How secure such full power?
Would you shrink from her answer?
Would you dare face defeat?

For to work out of time,
To endure out of space,
To live within her truth—
That alone is full triumph
And honour complete.

To come of age

At last we could keep quiet, each on his own
Signalling silently, though memorably
His news or latest unnews.

When younger we had spent those wintry evenings
In shoutings and wild laughter—
We dared not come of age.

Unless obsessed by love we never changed.
How could we change? Has true love ever changed?
Not in our day, but only in another's.

Tell me, my heart of hearts, I still beseech you:
When dare we reasonably come of age?

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Anthony Thwaite

Called For

Tonight we drive back late from talk and supper
Across miles of unlit roads, flat field and fen,
Towards home; but on the way must make a detour
And rescue you from what, half-laughingly,
We think of as your temporary world—
Some group or other, all outlandishly
Named and rigged up in fancy dress and loud
With adolescent grief. Well, we're too old
For alien caperings like that. The road
Runs towards home and habit, milk and bed.

That unborn child I locked up in neat stanzas
Survives in two or three anthologies,
An effigy sealed off from chance or changes.
Now I arrive near midnight, but too early
To claim you seventeen years afterwards:
A darkened auditorium, lit fitfully
By dizzy crimsons, pulsing and fading blues
Through which electric howls and snarled-out words
Isolate you (though only in my eyes)
Sitting among three hundred sprawling bodies.

Your pale face for a second looms up through
The jerking filters, splatterings of colour
As if spawned by the music, red and blue
Over and over—there, your face again,
Not seeing me, not seeing anything,
Distinct and separate, suddenly plain
Among so many others, strangers. Smoke
Lifts as from a winter field, obscuring
All but your face, consuming, as I look,
That child I gave protective rhetoric.

Not just this place, the tribal lights, the passive
Communion of noise and being young,
Not just the strident music which I give
No more than half an ear to; but the sense
Of drifting out into another plane
Beyond the one I move on, and moved once
To bring you into being—that is why
I falter as I call you by your name,
Claim you, as drifting up towards me now
You smile at me, ready for us to go.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rousseau & Equality

By Robert Nisbet

RECENT DISCUSSIONS of equality and inequality, on both sides of the Atlantic, convince me that for those proposing it as the primary objective of social policy, the motivating values, the methodology, and the implicit political theory differ very little from what can be found in Rousseau—and are rarely if ever stated as frankly, logically, and forthrightly. Rousseau's relevance to the surrounding political scene remains as great as ever, a fact best explained, no doubt, by his profound and seemingly ineffaceable role in the shaping of the modern consciousness. Whether it is the ideology of the political community, of totalitarianism, of permanent revolution, of counter-culture, or, now, of a radical equalitarianism, Rousseau's writings have more to offer by way of clarification of the moral and intellectual issues involved than those of anyone else I can think of. In our "post-industrial" society even Marx seems of diminishing utility in this regard.

At the moment we find ourselves in a period of relative calm, the surface of society again tranquil, generally speaking, and Jacobins, Babouvists, and Communards willing for the moment to leave the field to a fresh crop of *philosophes*. *Philosophes* do not like revolutions, as the experience of the 1960s made clear: only their intellectual preparation. They love tracts, secular homilies, sparkling dialogue of incessantly adversary function, and books on moral and social issues which have the manner if not the substance of philosophy and science. *Philosophes* are masters at raising issues which, logically envisaged, can be resolved only through revolutionary reconstruction of a social order and radical reshaping of human consciousness.

Their pattern is an almost constant one. First, through tract and text, present social reality as being largely a network of traps, toils, and tyrannies which have corrupting effect upon the individual. Second, declare existing institutions—family, church, school, guild, university, etc.—to be rooted in either corruption or impotence so deep as to unfit them for refuge or source of reform. And third, with the aid of philosophical method, provide some kind of legitimacy for the work of total, never piece-meal, reconstruction of society and, then, human nature.

Although predictions are hazardous, I think it very likely that during the next decade or two we shall be in for a new efflorescence of *philosophes*, their *ancien régime* the social order around us, their inspiriting and unifying theme, *equality*. Two impressive works have just entered the scene, both by *philosophe* authors of uncommon intelligence, learning, and ingenuity; both also by authors profoundly committed to the value of equality in a degree not remotely achieved in surrounding society. I refer to Christopher Jencks' *Inequality*[1] and to John Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*.[2] These two books are almost certain to be bellwethers for a line of similar works extending far into the future, at least so far as the rest of this century is concerned.

IT IS A MISTAKE to label these works socialist—though I dare say neither author would walk away in dudgeon if the label were applied—for their implications go well beyond what is signified by that historic, if now slightly old-fashioned, word. Socialism, after all, is associated with many values, not always indeed very closely with equality. What is fundamental and overriding in both Jencks and Rawls is not hostility towards private property, profits, or individual enterprise as such, so far as I can infer, but, rather, towards inequality in any and all forms, under whatever

[1] *Inequality*. By CHRISTOPHER JENCKS. Basic Books, $12.50, Allen Lane, £5.

[2] *A Theory of Justice*. By JOHN RAWLS. Oxford University Press, £5, paper £1.25; Harvard University Press, $15, paper $3.95.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

kind of social order. It is this that links Jencks and Rawls with a consciousness that is overwhelmingly Rousseauian; and it is the very important place Jencks' and Rawls' books will deservedly have in all subsequent thinking about equality that suggests the high value of fresh reading of Rousseau.

For in Rousseau we have, as we do not have in any contemporary writer, not even Jencks and Rawls in combination, the *entire* picture. This is a picture with not only the empirical descriptions of inequality and the demonstrations of failure of institutions and policy currently operating to remedy inequality that we get from Jencks; not only the deductive, at times Euclidean, manner of argument, based upon a few carefully contrived axioms or premises, we get from Rawls. It is a picture that has, in addition to these, to be sure, unhesitating and frank statement of the motivating values involved, the lengths of radicalism required, the type of power and the means of sealing off the equalitarian community from incessant threats to its purity which normally would exist, and, far from least, the depths of human consciousness which would have to be entered by any sovereign that determined to make equality the supreme value in a social order. Rousseau, in short, takes us directly to the City. Jencks and Rawls, for all their undoubted merits, drop us off in the suburbs.

ROUSSEAU SHRINKS from nothing in his passion to found a social order on the rock of equality. Only in a few religious figures in history do we find a like combination of zeal, relentless purpose, and willingness to take whatever steps are necessary to ensure salvation for mankind. After Rousseau, equality would be the Procrustean bed on which conceptions of freedom, justice, rights, and compassion would be placed by an unending and constantly increasing line of intellectuals in, first the West, then most other parts of the world.

Before commencing the analysis of Rousseau's writings that I shall follow in this essay—one based on the chronological sequence of his most important political writings—it is useful, I think, to mention quickly three basic, constitutive, and overriding themes in his social and political philosophy. In one degree or other, all three are to be found in the *Discourses* and the *Social Contract*, which are the works I shall limit myself to for the most part here.

First, the hatred of what can best be called intermediate society. That is, the ascending hierarchy of institutions, from family through parish, guild, and profession all the way to social class, the fabric of traditional elements of the social bond, such as friendship, mutual aid, and other kinds of elemental interdependence, and, most of all, the network of traditional authorities, which can be seen as lying intermediate to man and the political state.

Second, a love sometimes reaching adoration of the individual, conceived as liberated from the historically-developed constraints and coercions of traditional society, and placed in a new, nurturing context of association so tightly woven that man's re-endowed, true self will never again be subjected to the corruptions, torments, and conflicts which Rousseau had found to be the very stuff of ordinary society.

Third, an almost mystic dedication to omnipotence—whether in the person of legislator, tutor, or *eminence grise* or in the form of the General Will, rooted in a reconstituted and hence incorruptible *populus*—so broad and so penetrating, so omniscient, as to be able not only to emancipate the individual from the fetters of traditional society but to become the indispensable basis of a new political community where

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

men can, in Rousseau's words, "be forced to be free" and also equal in their rights, duties, possessions, and membership.

THESE ARE THE FUNDAMENTAL THEMES of Rousseau's political and social thought. In one degree or shape they can be found in the line of writings that stretches from the first Discourse through the *Social Contract* and also in such works as *Emile*; the romance, *Héloïse*; and, far from least, the *Confessions*. The flexibility, the versatility, of the themes taken together is obvious. As I tried to point out some three decades ago, they provide Rousseau's linkage with "totalitarianism." But their utility is greater and deeper than that. They can be seen in non-totalitarian manifestations of the political community, in expressions of the ideology of permanent revolution that has been, ever since the French Revolution, a fixed undercurrent of Western society, in writings as recent as those of the New Left, and, depending upon time, circumstance, and place, in incontestably liberal and democratic movements. The combination of social nihilism, absolute individualism, and adoration of legitimate, unlimited power is a formidable one. It is precisely this combination that offers undergirding for Rousseau's equalitarianism and endows him with such consummate relevance, such contemporaneity, at the present time.

KNOWING HOW TO READ Rousseau is, as I discovered long ago, vital. Too often readers go directly to the *Social Contract*. This is a mistake, for it is bound to remain a collection of epigrammatic, often digressive, and frequently opaque utterances unless one reaches the book by pretty much the same route that Rousseau took over a twelve-year period in order, eventually, to write it. This is a route that includes the *Discourses* above all else, and it is these, together with the *Social Contract*, that will occupy us for the most part in this essay. Any other references will be brief and for purposes of added emphasis only; one can learn just about all there is to be learned about Rousseau the philosopher of equality from these texts.[3]

The first of the *Discourses* was published in 1750, and it yielded Rousseau a prize from the Academy of Dijon, which had set the question: *"Has the Restoration of the Arts and Sciences had a Purifying Effect upon Morals?"* Rousseau's answer, as is well known, was in the negative. But the real significance of this short piece has little to do with the question as stated by the Academy, and it is failure to recognise this point that has often led to neglect or merely superficial understanding of the first *Discourse*. What we have in fact, fully and often brilliantly stated, is a countercultural position that would not require many textual changes for it to have immediacy in our own time. The first *Discourse* is, as I say, only passingly and tepidly interested in the arts and sciences as such and their negative role in human happiness. It is, most deeply and pervasively, an attack upon the values, institutions, and intimate social relationships of the society Rousseau had, as a young man, entered in France and about which he had such agonising conflicts of regard. In this *Discourse* we are given a picture of French society—with full implications reaching all civilised society—that is skilfully textured, with the full range of tones and accents reaching from egoistic corruption to inauthenticity. That last is not Rousseau's word; but it will serve as a reasonably exact synonym of a word that very definitely is Rousseau's: *hypocrisy*. The society around him, Rousseau tells us, is riven with "jealousy, suspicion, fear, coldness, reserve, hate, and fraud." But surmounting even these is "hypocrisy."

Now, what is the cause of this hypocritical or inauthentic society? In a word "inequality." It is in this *Discourse*—though I do not say in this work alone—that the *leit-motiv* is introduced. Listen to Rousseau on the source of the corruption that for him spreads through all society:

> "whence arise all those abuses, unless it be from that fatal inequality introduced among men by the difference of talents and the cheapening of virtue. This is the most evident effect of all our studies, and the most dangerous of all their consequences."

Dangerous indeed, for whatever else the *ancien régime* was, it was hierarchical: in social structure, in religion, and also, it might be noted, in the intellectual-*philosophe* community, one that as Rousseau learned to his occasional humiliation

[3] All references to the *Social Contract* and to the three *Discourses* are based on the G. D. H. Cole translations of the texts, contained in the easily accessible Everyman edition, in one volume. It is unfortunate that the editor-translator, Professor Cole, and the publisher did not see fit to set the *Discourses* in front of the *Social Contract*, thus making for a sequence of argument as logical and illuminating as it is in fact chronological. As it is, readers of the Everyman edition often never get beyond the *Social Contract*, if indeed through it alone.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tended to regard equality as a virtue only insofar as it did not affect their own status in the salons of Paris. Inequality, then, for Rousseau in 1750—as for Christopher Jencks or John Rawls in the America of two centuries later—is the cause of the conflict, hypocrisy, the corruption (the inauthenticity, in a word) he had in his own personal life come to hate and to feel humiliated by.

LET US PASS NOW to the second *Discourse*, this one published in 1755, also in response to a topic presented by the Academy at Dijon: *"What is the Origin of Inequality Among Men, and Is it Authorised by Natural Law?"*

Any reader today of Professors Rawls and Jencks is bound to feel at home with such a question. He is bound to feel even more at home with Rousseau's extended answer. I happen to regard this, the second Discourse, as the single most brilliant piece of sociological writing in the 18th century; never mind what we may feel its long-run consequences to have been on Western social structure and culture. Here Rousseau uses with extraordinary advantage a methodological device known in the 18th century as "conjectural" or "natural" or "speculative" history, or what Rousseau himself calls "hypothetical" history. In its way it is the precursor of the 19th century's cherished social evolutionary or developmental works. In its way it is also the precursor of what Professor Rawls makes fundamental in his *A Theory of Justice*, that is, the hypothetical "original position" from which he deduces so many monumental, or at least statuesque, propositions regarding the good and the desirable for 20th-century society in the West.

> "Let us begin, then, by laying facts aside, as they do not affect the question."

This sentence, at the very beginning of the second *Discourse*, has been so many times derided. And yet, given the then regnant methodology of science so far as the study of man was involved, it is perfectly intelligible and justifiable. All Rousseau implied by the statement, as his succeeding words make quite evident, was the irrelevance and immateriality of ordinary historical data, given the issue that for him—as for Professor Rawls—was vital. What is the nature of man? What would man have become? What would society today be if there had not taken place some "fatal accident" that diverted man's history from equality and goodness to the corrupt, tyrannous, and hypocritical—above all, inequalitarian—society whose poisoned fruits we are obliged to live on today?

It is not true (as Arthur O. Lovejoy pointed out in detail many years ago) that for Rousseau the primal state of nature was mankind's happiest stage of existence—it was a later one, after language, morality, and the elemental arts had come into being, that Rousseau thought probably the happiest for man. But it is true that this primal state, as best it could be reconstructed through a speculative, rationalist psychology and ethnology, was the one which Rousseau used as his "laboratory" in which to examine the true nature of man.

THERE ARE MANY THINGS to be found in second *Discourse*, including a distinct pre-Marxian recognition of the curse placed upon mankind by the rise of private property and condemnation of man thereby to an alienated existence. The speculations on the origin and development of language, of morality, the arts, and the earliest forms of social structure are, without exception, ingenious and reflect a degree of learning Rousseau is not always credited with. Necessarily, I must concentrate here on what is essential in that *Discourse* so far as my subject is concerned. That is the rise of social inequality, yes, but also the immediately precipitating *conditions* of inequality. And these are what Rousseau called "combinations", that is, social interdependences which involved authority, hierarchy, and other elements of the social bond that for Rousseau were chains upon man's true nature, despoilers of the freedom he had known earlier in his evolution.

> "So long as men. . . undertook only what a single person could accomplish, and confined themselves to such arts as did not require the joint labour of several hands, they lived free, healthy, honest, and happy lives. . . . But from the moment one man began to stand in need of the help of another; from the moment it appeared advantageous to any one man to have enough provisions for two, equality disappeared, property was introduced, work became indispensable, and vast forests became smiling fields which man had to water with the sweat of his brow, and where slavery and misery were soon seen to germinate and grow up with the crops."

Observe in that passage the emphasis upon, not property or work as such, but upon social interdependences, upon aspects of the social bond rising from work or mutual need, which, in words he uses just before the quoted passage,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

refers to "combinations fatal to innocence and happiness." True, by Rousseau's own declaration, it was the discovery of agriculture and the metallurgical arts, and with these the rise of private property, which provided background—necessary background. Nevertheless, it is Rousseau the sociologist rather than Rousseau the economist who is foremost here. It is the Rousseau who had very early come to despise and fear the ordinary ties of civil society, with all their tiny but potent webs of authority and hierarchy, their traps of inequality, who is offering us analysis that had begun in the first *Discourse*.

Once the "combinations fatal to innocence and happiness" began to proliferate in early society—began to take from man his true nature and replace it with something alien to his being—then

> "it became the interest of men to appear what they really were not. To be and to seem became two totally different things; and from this distinction sprang insolent pomp and cheating trickery, with all the numerous vices that go in their train."

In that statement, obviously, we are brought back to the theme of the first *Discourse*, the point of departure of the second. In the first we were told that the hypocrisy, uncertainty, and corruption of the social order around him sprang from inequality. In the second *Discourse* we have what is by the standards of the time a superlative essay in anthropology and social psychology that seeks to demonstrate how deep the roots of inequality are in the human condition and, therefore, how radical must be the remedy. That remedy is provided us in the third *Discourse*, to which I shall come in a moment. There is, however, an anticipatory statement in the *Discourse on Inequality* in which, noting the defects of all early efforts at the reform of the political state that had been brought eventually into existence by social inequality, strife, and conflict, he writes prophetically:

> "It [the state] was continually being patched up, when the first task should have been to get the site cleared and all the old materials removed, as was done by Lycurgus at Sparta, if a stable and lasting edifice was to be erected."

IT HAS BEEN SO OFTEN SAID of Rousseau that his desire was to return men to the state of nature that one almost despairs of setting the matter straight. Never anywhere to my knowledge did Rousseau so much as hint at any desirability of mankind's abandoning of civil society and, in effect, returning to forests and fields of the primordial condition. The "state of nature" for Rousseau was never anything more than, first, a term for the primal condition that has never ceased to fascinate philosophers and social scientists: and, second, a touchstone of moral excellence that could be applied to existing societies.

What Rousseau sought, with powerful effect, was no retreat from civilisation but, rather, *a form of government* that would, at one and the same time, liberate man from social inequalities and their tyrannies of spirit and, equally important, establish a form of association from which all such inequalities and tyrannies would be forever banned. And, as men have on so many occasions in Western history (our own day included), Rousseau turned to politics as the redemptive means.

More accurately I should say that Rousseau availed himself of the theme of political redemption that had been in his mind from his youth. In the *Confessions* he tells us that in 1743, while an aide in the French embassy at Venice, well before he commenced any of his important social and political writings, the thought came to him one day

> "that everything was radically connected with politics, and that however one proceeded, no people would be other than the nature of its government made it."

Not by an iota did Rousseau ever deviate from that conviction. In the first *Discourse* there is adulation expressed for ancient Sparta, its people freed of the corrupting influences of the kind of society and culture Athens knew, and in another connection unmistakable admiration for "military virtues." In the second *Discourse*, having made clear, in words which Marx and Engels must surely have studied with care a century later, that the political state came into being as the means of seeking to contain, to moderate the conflicts in society generated by social inequality, Rousseau emphasises the destructive effects of the political state upon men's liberty.

> "All ran headlong to their chains, in hopes of securing their liberty; for they had just wit enough to perceive the advantages of political institutions, without experience enough to foresee the dangers."

It is, however, in the third *Discourse*, "On Political Economy", published shortly afterwards, that the inspiration of 1743 becomes fully articulated.

Rarely if ever in history, at least since Plato, has the idea of the total political community been

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

advanced so compellingly, has the theme of redemptive political power reaching the very roots of human personality been presented so temptingly, or the notion of a total human virtue fashioned by political psychology been set before readers so enchantingly. I know of no work unless it be Plato's *Republic* that so consecrates man to the redeemer-state. It is not possible here to deal adequately with the rich insights into the relation between power and personality that Rousseau furnishes us, between politics and morality, and the many other elements of this work which have worked their way tellingly into modernity, especially into the whole radical thrust of the modern intellectual's mind. I must stay, all too briefly, with the elements which are most apposite to the problem of inequality in society.

If the third *Discourse* is best thought of as an 18th-century "Theory of Justice", its regard equal between liberty and equality which for Rousseau (as for Professor Rawls) are the two constitutive principles of legitimate society, it has to be said that Rousseau's grasp of the political implications of equalitarian justice is far more sophisticated, or at least a great deal more open and candid than anything that can be found in Rawls' work. Rousseau was under no illusions that an equalitarian society could come into existence merely through men's contemplation of abstractly stated principles of justice, or even through systematic education in any ordinary sense of that word. What was required, as Rousseau sees shrewdly and states brilliantly, was a totally new conception of power, one that instead of being remote superstructure would penetrate the most intimate recesses of the social order, indeed of the human mind.

> "If it is good to know how to deal with men as they are, it is much better to make them what there is need that they should be. The most absolute authority is that which penetrates into a man's inmost being and concerns itself no less with his will than with his actions. It is certain that all peoples become in the long run what the government makes them."

For at least fifteen years (beginning, as I have noted, when Rousseau was an aide in Venice) that theme had been virtually inseparable from Rousseau's passion for equality and his hatred of all the inequalities which are the very stuff of civil society. Precisely as the religious millennialist knows how indispensable is God the absolute sovereign—omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent—to the salvation of man, so does Rousseau know how vital is the absolute sovereign in political terms. Without it, as he recognised almost mystically and eschatologically, all talk of justice, liberty, virtue, and equality is but idle rhetoric. I dare say Rousseau would regard most of what is today being written in dedication to equality (including, I fear, Professor Rawls' *A Theory of Justice*) as lacking in essential substance, as being emasculated by refusal to deal candidly with the problems of political power and of political psychology necessarily involved in any forthright proposal for building the social order on the rock of equality. Very well indeed did Rousseau know how deeply rooted in man's character is the impulse to *inequality* and how diversely manifest in the entire social fabric is this impulse. As only a supreme power can save man from original sin in the religious realm, only an equal power can save man from society's inherent and pervasive inequality.

WHAT IS THIS POWER? The General Will, a power not the less absolute, total, and penetrating for its declared roots in the people—that is, the people first purified, cleansed of the false wills and desires and attitudes which history has implanted in their minds and personalities, and, as it were, psychologically reconstituted. By definition the General Will, in contrast to the Will of All, is the will that emerges when the members of the political community are able to give their allegiances and their thoughts completely to the community, when they have become liberated from the false consciousness that directs them to think and act as individuals or as representatives of partial interests in the social order. The General Will has nothing to do with a majority as such, least of all with the mere counting of votes.

"The first and most important rule of legitimate government", Rousseau tells us in the third *Discourse*,

> "that is, government whose object is the good of the people, is to follow in everything the General Will. How is the General Will to be ascertained? Must the whole nation be assembled? Certainly not. It ought the less to be assembled, because it is by no means certain that its decision would be the expression of the General Will; besides, the method would be impracticable in a great people, and is hardly ever necessary where the government is well-intentioned: for the rulers well know that the General Will is always on the side which is most favourable to the public interest, that is, most equitable, so that it is needful only to act justly, to be certain of following the General Will. . . ."

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Rousseau would adapt that somewhat in later writings, including the *Social Contract*, seeking a means whereby voting might reveal the General Will, even suggesting that the majority must be followed. But from beginning to end in Rousseau there is the clear distinction between the General Will, alone sovereign, incorruptible, and the guardian of public interest, discernible by its common interest rather than by number of heads, and what is revealed by voting and by representation. For representation Rousseau had only contempt. Correctly, he saw representative institutions as the yield of that feudalism he and other *philosophes* hated in all respects. It is impossible to read Rousseau—and this holds in such works as *Emile* and *La nouvelle Héloïse*, in his drafts of constitutions for Corsica and for Poland, in the famous diatribe against D'Alembert, as well as in the third *Discourse* and the *Social Contract*—without becoming aware of his obsession with the kind of power Tocqueville was to describe, in a classic passage, as "absolute, minute, regular, provident, and mild." Whether it is Rousseau in his role of tutor to Emile or of Legislator in the chapter of that title in the *Social Contract*, or any of the other roles he assumed from time to time, power—cast in therapeutic terms, power as redeemer, purifier, guardian as well as sovereign in the ordinary sense, power above all as the community in which reconstituted human beings would have equal rights—is the indispensable element, the *vis generatrix* and the *vis conservatrix*, of a just social order.

But what separates Rousseau's envisagement of political power from that of anyone else (with the possible exception of Plato, whom Rousseau adored) is the linking of power with morality, with liberty, and, of course, with equality. Rousseau is never less than the political psychologist in his treatment of power in relation to human beings.

> "If you would have the General Will accomplished, bring all the particular wills into conformity with it; in other words, as virtue is nothing more than this conformity of the particular wills to the General Will, establish the reign of virtue."

> "To form citizens is not the work of a day; and in order to have men it is necessary to educate them when they are children. It will be said, perhaps, that whoever has men to govern ought not to seek, beyond their nature, a perfection of which they are incapable; that he ought not to desire to destroy their passions; and that the execution of such an attempt is no more desirable than it is possible. I will agree, further, that a man without passions would certainly be a bad citizen; but it must be agreed also that, if men are not taught to love some things, it is impossible to teach them to love one object more than another—to prefer that which is truly beautiful to that which is deformed. If, for example, they were early accustomed to regard their individuality only in its relation to the body of the State, and to be aware, so to speak, of their own existence merely as a part of that of the State, they might at length come to identify themselves in some degree with this greater whole, to feel themselves members of their country, and to love it with that exquisite feeling which no isolated person has save for himself; to lift up their spirits perpetually to this great object, and thus to transform into a sublime virtue that dangerous disposition which gives rise to all our vices."

How profoundly the uses of power recommend themselves to Rousseau in his character of political psychologist can be seen in a passage of the third *Discourse* where he treats of the relation of public power to the family. The context is the system of education which for Rousseau is total, beginning in infancy, not terminating until death. The government, he writes, should not

> "abandon to the intelligence and prejudices of fathers the education of their children, as that education is of still greater importance to the State than to the fathers. . . . Families dissolve, but the State remains.

> "Should the public authority, by taking the place of the father and charging itself with that important function, acquire his rights, by discharging his duties, he would have the less cause to complain, as he would have in common, under the name of *citizen*, the same authority over his children, as he was exercising separately under the name of father, and would not be less obeyed when speaking in the name of the law than when he spoke in that of nature."

Rarely in the history of power has the social molecule been so completely broken as in that passage on the family. It is important, though, to keep in mind that what actuates Rousseau is not power for its own sake, not power as sole possible refuge from a Hobbesian state of nature, but power as the necessary instrument by which to liberate man from inequality and its myriad corruptions and conflicts and also to create for man an equalitarian community. Above anyone else in the history of political thought Rousseau gave to the word *citizen* a majesty previously reserved for such words as Father, Brother, Priest, King, and Lord. And, for Rousseau, the central essence of citizenship is equal participation in power—the power that, as we have seen, suffuses the community, reaching every corner and crevice.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Necessarily, attention must be given to matters of property and possessions in the political community. This we find in the final section of the third *Discourse*.

> "It is not enough to have citizens and to protect them, it is also necessary to consider their subsistence."

Rousseau does not ban property from personal possession; at least not the residual property, the necessary possessions, all men must have in their individual names.

> "It is certain that the right of property is the most sacred of all the rights of citizenship, and even more important in some respects than liberty itself. . . ."

There is no reason to believe that Rousseau was other than sincere in that statement. But neither is there any reason to believe that by "private property" he had much else in mind than what he further on calls "the common necessaries of life." Socialism would be too strong a word for the kind of public weal Rousseau describes in this section of the third *Discourse,* but by the time one has finished reading Rousseau's artful prescriptions for taxation, based as they are on his hatred of all luxuries—within which he places the arts—and his passionate exclamations on behalf of the common man, one is obliged to come up with a conception not very far off from socialism; one that is in almost equal measure puritan and communal.

EQUALITARIANISM IS THE WARP, of course, on which his proposed system of taxation is woven. Space prevents any detailed account here of this proposed system; I shall content myself with two or three of Rousseau's recommendations, all of which should please our contemporary equalitarians. First, those who "possess only the common necessaries of life should pay nothing at all." But taxation should be extended to everything, to all the "superfluities" an individual might have over and above the common necessaries. Those who object on the ground that rank is not thereby taken into account (and that what may seem "superfluous" to the common man is not by any means superfluous to another) receive short shrift from Rousseau. The "grandee has two legs just like a cowherd and, like him again, but one belly."

It is easy enough to withhold sympathy, of course, for what Rousseau calls a "grandee." Our sympathy might be stretched, though, when a little later in the discussion we find Rousseau treating just as sternly what he calls "the useless professions." Here he makes plain that among these are artists and others involved in any way in "public entertainments" ("dancers, singers, players" not excluded). Rousseau's hatred of the public arts was almost total, as his notable *Letter to D'Alembert* (1758) suggests in detail and as his recommendations to the citizens of Corsica suggest in even more austere fashion. And we cannot forget Rousseau's jibes and jeers at the scholars of his day, those whom he contemptuously refers to in the first *Discourse* as comprising "herds of textbook writers", "mountebanks exhibiting themselves in public", and mere hawkers of wares. There is no reason to believe that Rousseau would regard the arts and sciences as other than baneful manifestations of social inequality.

THERE IS AN INTERESTING and brief discussion toward the end of the third *Discourse* of a form of taxation that might with some justice be thought of as Rousseau's "difference principle", though it has little resemblance to Professor Rawls' principle of that name. The imposition of an equitable tax, Rousseau suggests, "ought not to be in simple ratio to the property of the contributors, but *in compound ratio to the difference of their conditions and the superfluity of their possessions*" (italics added). Rousseau, it has to be admitted, manifests a little more humility about his difference principle than does, I fear, Professor Rawls, for he acknowledges that while the arithmetic of the compound ratio would be within ordinary powers, the judgment, the necessity for discriminating insight, might make even a Plato or Montesquieu look heavenward for guidance.

At no point did Rousseau ever imagine (as have so many of our liberals and progressives during the present century) that the good society can be had for the asking, had for simple legislation and appeal to popular reason. There is a passage in the *Social Contract* that I shall come to in a moment, one in the chapter on The Legislator, that gives awful emphasis to what Rousseau knew to be required in the way of psychological surgery and transplant. Here it will suffice to cite a few more words on the subject of the General Will in the third *Discourse*. To follow the General Will

> "it is necessary to know it, and above all to distinguish it from the particular will, beginning with one's self: this distinction is always difficult to make,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and only the most sublime virtue can afford sufficient illumination for it."

Many today might wonder from how many ill-fated, even tragic and destructive political designs we might have been saved during the past two centuries if their architects had but paused to look for even a part of the "sublime virtue" in human consciousness that Rousseau had wisely made a condition of the good society, and for the achievement of which he was willing to declare what was in effect permanent revolution.

THE *Social Contract* was, we are told, treated with a good deal of indifference by the reading public when it appeared in 1762. One can easily see why. Too many of its electric and quite essential passages are separated by meandering streams of exposition and often pedantic digression. The reason lies, no doubt, in the fact that the book was a kind of compromise between Rousseau's desire to publish a truly systematic work of great length on "political institutions" and his unconquerable passion to instruct the public without let. Despite its classic status, its demonstrable influence upon the political mind in not merely the West but quite literally the entire world, the book is unsatisfactory in many ways and cannot compare in strictly philosophical terms with Hobbes' *Leviathan*, say, or Montesquieu's *Spirit of the Laws*, books which Rousseau admired almost as much as he did Plato's *Republic*.

Nevertheless, the *Social Contract* achieved, after Rousseau's death, a unique popularity by virtue of the magnetic appeal it exerted upon minds like Robespierre and Saint-Just. Apparently it even had substantial following among the rank-and-file of the Revolution. A contemporary tells us that hardly a paragraph in the book failed to be quoted at one time or other in the newspapers, and that excited groups of citizens could be seen reading and discussing the book on the streets of Paris. No matter what one may think of the work taken as a whole or set against the grand project Rousseau had wished to complete, it has some of the most brilliant passages and torch-like phrases to be found anywhere in the history of thought. What follows here is not intended to be another assessment of the book, even in briefest terms. All I want to do is show the relationship of the book to those ideas and themes we have thus far been concerned with here, those pertaining to equality and its vital contexts.

As in his earlier writings, the two themes of liberty and equality are dominating. And also as in these earlier writings, the referent of each theme is the individual in his relation to traditional society and all its hierarchies and networks of authority. *"Man is born free; and everywhere he is in chains."* Those are the thrilling words with which the first chapter begins. The chains are, of course, the interdependences founded on place, kinship, class, religion, work, and composed of the tiny but puissant links of friendship, mutual aid, social exchange, conformity, and other aspects of the social bond which Rousseau had come to detest for their generation of inequality, corruption, and conflict and their debasement of the individual.

The problem, we are told, is

"to find a form of association which will defend and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate, and in which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before."

The problem might seem insuperable by the criteria of all ordinary conceptions of liberty, but it is within easy reach of the Rousseauian vision of the *populus* and the individual, each refashioned by the permanent revolution of the General Will. Rousseau, it must be admitted, is fully aware of the requirements—somewhat more so than the equalitarian *philosophes* of our own day who tend to shrink, it sometimes seems, from the political-psychological implications of their chosen premises and moral objectives. What is demanded, Rousseau says calmly, is

"the total alienation of each associate, together with all his rights, to the whole community; for, in the first place, as each gives himself, absolutely, the conditions are the same for all; and, this being so, no one has any interest in making them burdensome to others."

That is the social contract—conceived in and dedicated to the absolute equality that Rousseau cherished in the deepest parts of his mind, capable of being fulfilled, as Rousseau well knew, only through the instrument of a profounder, more penetrating, more absolute power than any ever before known in human society but a power, by its very nature, that could liberate man completely from all the tyrannous inequalities which he regarded as inseparable from traditional society. Rousseau is perfectly aware of what he is

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

doing in the name of equality and liberty. The social compact reduces itself, he goes on, to this:

> "Each of us puts his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the General Will, and, in our corporate capacity, we receive each member as an indivisible part of the whole."

Then comes, in full effect and brilliant clarity, the passage that lets us know precisely what the costs of equality must be:

> "In order then that the social compact may not be an empty formula, it tacitly includes the undertaking, which alone can give force to the rest, that whoever refuses to obey the General Will shall be compelled to do so by the whole body. This means nothing less than that *he will be forced to be free*; for this is the condition which, by giving each citizen to his country, *secures him against all personal dependence*. In this lies the key to the working of the political machine; this alone legitimises civil undertakings, which without it, would be absurd, tyrannical, and liable to the most frightful abuses." (Italics added)

OBSERVE IN THE PASSAGE the recurrence of the theme we have seen to lie in the three *Discourses* (and which lies in other works as well, including *Emile* and *La nouvelle Héloïse*, along with his letters and the two draft constitutions): the intolerability of personal dependence, that is, normal social interdependence with its incessant threat to equality, and the recurrence of the theme that had come to him in almost blinding revelation while a young man in Venice: the necessity of absolute political power as the means of creating justice and virtue in human affairs. How well Rousseau had learned his sociology from experience! For nothing is more certain than inequality once anything resembling free association, spontaneous social ties, and historically developed institutions come into being on their own.

And how perceptive—and correct!—Rousseau is in his recognition that for the equalitarian social order to come into being, and, above all, to remain in being, relationships among individuals must be as few and tenuous as possible, with, however, each individual's relation to the corporate body, to the state, as close as possible. Once the social compact, resting on the absolute General Will, is established, "each citizen would then be perfectly independent of all the rest, and at the same time very dependent on the [state]."

LIKE THE EQUALITARIAN *philosophes* writing today, Rousseau prizes an equality that will exist irrespective of unequal faculties, motivations, and aspirations in life, based as these so often are on natural differences among individuals. The fundamental social compact does not, Rousseau writes, destroy natural inequality. It instead "substitutes, for such physical inequality as nature may have set up between men, an equality that is moral and legitimate, and that men, who may be unequal in strength or intelligence, become every one equal by convention and legal right." One need only glance at Professor Rawls' proposals in his *A Theory of Justice* along this very line to see quickly how powerful the Rousseauian constraint remains upon minds intoxicated by moral redemption of man.

Rousseau's continuing superiority lies, though, in his passion for honesty and clarity. At no point does he imply that the social contract, the adoption by man of life consecrated to equality, can be effected through other than means of the most revolutionary character. About the nearest any of our current *philosophes* have come to this realisation is Christopher Jencks' brief and somewhat abstracted conclusion, in the very final pages of his *Inequality*, that the principal obstacle to equality in America today is the refusal of most people even to consider inequality a problem, from which Professor Jencks reaches the further conclusion that if we want to achieve equality, or as he calls it more delicately here, "redistribution",

> "we will not only have to politicize the question of income inequality but alter people's basic assumptions about the extent to which they are responsible for their neighbors and their neighbors for them."

Well, Rousseau knew that at the very outset of his labours, and the whole revolutionary strategy of the General Will was designed precisely to "alter people's basic assumptions" in this respect.

Unlike (again) our contemporary *philosophes* he knew this intent to "alter" had immense long-run consequences—the total politicisation of life through the General Will, the abolition of all forms of association, including religion, which might militate against the dogmas of the social compact, the exclusion of the arts and sciences above the most primitive level, the willingness of man to surrender himself and all his rights to the total community, finding "liberty" in equality of participation in the General Will, and, above all else, the continuing refashioning of man's mind and character. In the chapter on "The Legislator"—who is for the work of politics what the tutor is for the work of individual develop-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ment in *Emile*, what the chilling figure of Wolmar is for the work of human relationships in *La nouvelle Héloïse*—we have Rousseau's superbly candid statement of what must be done. And what a welcome relief it is from the somewhat evasive language we tend to get in our own time on this vital matter!

> "He who dares to undertake the making of a people's institutions ought to feel himself capable, so to speak, of changing human nature, of transforming each individual, who is by himself a complete and solitary whole, into part of a greater whole . . . of altering man's constitution for the purpose of strengthening it . . . and of substituting a partial and moral existence for the physical and independent existence nature has conferred on us all. He must, in a word, take away from man his own resources and give him new ones alien to him."

Precisely. So declared Robespierre and Saint-Just. So spoke Dostoevsky's Grand Inquisitor. And so have dreamed almost all millennialist revolutionaries since the French Revolution, from Gracchus Babeuf down to Frantz Fanon.

FINALLY, IT MUST BE SAID for Rousseau—and here too there is valuable instruction for those in our day who would disdain to hypothesise religion in their quest for equality—that he knew full well the necessity of giving equality, and with it the General Will and all the laws flowing from this will, the ineradicable cast of the sacred. Hence the brilliant penultimate chapter on the civil religion. Men must have a religion, Rousseau there tells us, for otherwise the political tie will not remain firm and close. None of the extant, traditional religions will do, however, for their attention is always on the supernatural. Christianity is particularly objectionable, for it lacks the martial virtues which must always be resplendent in the good society. Imagine, Rousseau tells us, "your Christian republic face to face with Sparta or Rome: the pious Christians will be beaten, crushed, and destroyed, before they know where they are, or will owe their safety only to the contempt their enemy will conceive for them. . . ." And in any event Christianity has the fatal political ethic of desiring a large measure of autonomy from the state, a condition clearly intolerable under the General Will.

There must, therefore, be instituted a civil religion, "a purely civil profession of faith." In no way, Rousseau tells us—and here is one place at least where he is being unwontedly dishonest or disingenuous—will this civil religion interfere with men's freedom of conscience in reference to their religious beliefs, Christian or other, "for, as the Sovereign has no authority in the other world, whatever the lot of its subjects may be in the life to come, that is not its business, provided they are good citizens in this life." Subjects owe the Sovereign "an account of their opinions only to such an extent as they matter to the community."

But, as Rousseau must surely have recognised, all struggles between the religious (especially the Christian) and the political in history have concerned precisely religious opinions "as they matter to the community." Not the most despotic of Roman emperors cared a fig for Christian beliefs about the next world. It was this world that mattered, and it was this world that primitive Christianity could only too often seem to be revolutionising. Thus the basic dishonesty, or, certainly, naivety, in the light of the proffered freedom of conscience of the following passage, deadly in its implications to all social and cultural freedom but vitally necessary to any society dedicated to equality and founded upon the General Will:

> "There is therefore a purely civil profession of faith of which the Sovereign should fix the articles, not exactly as religious dogmas, but as social sentiments without which a man cannot be a good citizen or faithful subject. While it can compel no one to believe them, it can banish from the state whoever does not believe them—it can banish him, not for impiety, but as an anti-social being, incapable of truly loving the laws and justice, and of sacrificing, at need, his life to his duty. If anyone, after publicly recognising these dogmas, behaves as if he does not believe them, let him be punished by death: he has committed the worst of all crimes, that of lying before the law."

It comes almost as a shock, after that passage and its clearly forestated premises of the Sovereign's responsibility for opinions as "they matter to the community" and, not to be forgotten, of the infallibility and incorruptibility of the General Will, to be told in the next paragraph that among the dogmas of the civil religion is one forbidding intolerance. *Credo quia absurdum* is, obviously, as applicable to the civil as to any other form of religion.

BUT SUCH NAIVETY or blinding excess of political zeal should not cause us to lose sight of the overall shrewdness and brilliance of Rousseau's chapter on religion.

He understood, as few if any equality-intoxicated *philosophes* of our day seem to

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

understand, that if the dogma of equality is to be instituted and made to survive it must be buttressed by a form of power that draws as much from religious as political substance.

Men will die for a dogma, a great Christian theologian once wrote, who will not even stir for a conclusion.

In Memory of the American Fifties

Where have they gone—
Those adolescent girls
I loved but never touched?
The ones with clear complexions
Perfect legs, and breasts
I stared at over shelves of
Magazines in shops: All
The high-jumping cheerleaders,
The handsome homecoming queens.
Did they fit too well their sweaters,
Fit too well those parts
They played in 1956 when
Foster Dulles spoke of reappraisals
And when, agonising,
Robert Lowell quoted him?

There were others—
Those who had no partners
At the dances but pretended
To be interested in conversation
Or in cokes while all their
Sexy sisters felt the cocks
That swelled against their legs
When lights were low.
Those girls who sat in corners
Have grown lithe and tough: they'll
Race this wanton world to its end.
Among the dancers, though,
Who survives the dance?
Did they die at twenty-nine,
O all of them?
Or did you marry one, my friend,
Perhaps the very last,
Who winds her hair in curlers now
And drinks her whisky straight—
Who leaves you home alone at night
And stays out very late?

John Matthias

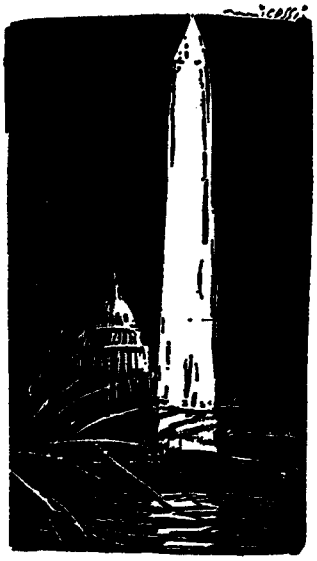
PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AMERICAN CHRONICLE

A "Founding Father"

The Sally Hemings Affair

By Max Beloff



IN HIS RECENT column (ENCOUNTER, May), "*R*" speculated on the possible reasons for the great success in the United States of Gore Vidal's *Burr*.[1] He suggested that one reason might be the desire of Americans to escape from the idealised version of their earlier history still purveyed in the schoolbooks, so as to make the grimmer aspects of the American present more acceptable. If there were no heroes in the past, then the weaknesses of America's present leaders and the ambiguities of America's own contemporary pretensions become more palatable.

It could, of course, be said that this is to make too much of a book that may owe most of its acclaim to the author's literary skill—for like "*R*" and unlike some other critics in this country, I also find Mr Vidal's novel admirable and I do so as someone who on the whole dislikes the historical novel as literary form, and who rather hopes that the same richness of material might yet be used to write a straightforward biography of Aaron Burr so that the force of the argument could be tested in a more direct fashion. How far would one, then, have to agree with "*R*" that the real incidents described in the novel are "exaggerated to the point of caricature"? Yet it might be argued that some of the work has already been done, and is indeed made use of by Mr Vidal who explicitly refers to his debt to Leonard W. Levy's *Jefferson and Civil Liberties* which more than ten years ago showed up the ambiguities in Jefferson's position on a number of crucial issues, and in particular his indifference to legal principles of the first importance in the prosecution of Burr.[2] Not of course that all recent scholarship would accept so hostile an interpretation of Jefferson's actions in this respect![3] What the novelist can do in a way not open to the historian is to give imaginative life to an alternative view, and whether or not this is valuable must depend on circumstance.

WHAT THEN, one wonders, will be the effect of another and more ambitious attempt to review some of the conventional assumptions about the Founding Fathers—Mrs Fawn Brodie's *Thomas Jefferson, An Intimate History*. For Mrs Brodie, an historian and biographer of established reputation, does not rely on the novelist's art to make her points. She is content to be judged by the canons of historical scholarship, and much of her book necessarily discusses the evidence for the views she puts forward and the views of other scholars upon it and them.[4]

Mrs Brodie's book is not intended to lower Jefferson's reputation but simply to present a more human Jefferson whom we can admire more through knowing him better. She wishes to destroy the marble image that does duty for the man, but to make the man himself more understandable in both his strengths and his weaknesses. The changes that Mrs Brodie wants to bring about in the accepted view of Jefferson are twofold. She finds it unlikely that he remained a chaste widower in the long years after the premature death of his wife, and thus seeks to establish the existence of possible extra-marital relationships after that event. She also seeks to show that the more important of these was with his slave Sally Hemings, probably the illegitimate daughter of his own wife's father. And the importance she attaches to the latter is in relation to the explanation it might offer of Jefferson's

[1] *Burr*. By GORE VIDAL. Random House, $8·95; Heinemann, £2·75. See *Encounter*, May 1974, pp. 25–6.
[2] Leonard W. Levy, *Jefferson and Civil Liberties: The Darker Side* (Harvard University Press, 1963).
[3] See the long discussion of the Burr conspiracy and trial in a book that appeared almost simultaneously with Mr Vidal's *Jefferson the President: Second Term*: By DUMAS MALONE. Little Brown, paper $2·95, £1·50
[4] *Thomas Jefferson, An Intimate History*. By FAWN M. BRODIE. Norton, $12·50, £6·25

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

own ambiguous views on the negro race and slavery in America.

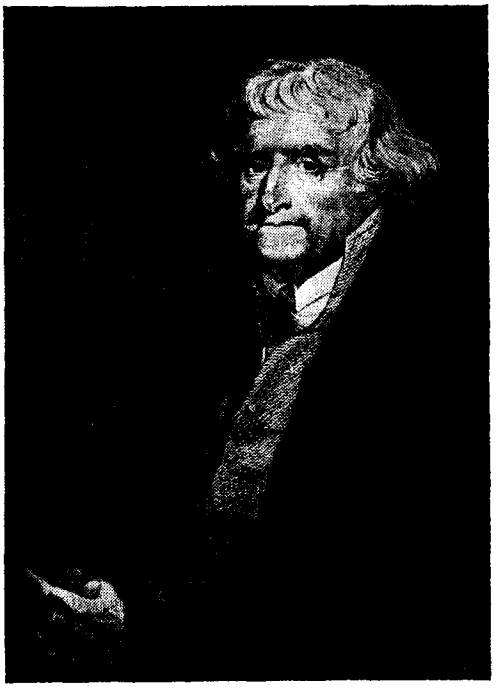
We do not need to worry overmuch about the first of these propositions. Mrs Brodie believes that the evidence of Jefferson's relationship with Maria Cosway during his years in Paris having been for a time a sexual one is convincing:

> "... the nuances and overtones in his letters are richly suggestive and the writers most certain of Jefferson's continuing chastity minimize or ignore the relevant fact that Maria Cosway returned to Paris for a second autumn without her husband and stayed almost four months. ... "

It is always hard to be certain of what is implied by the verbal nuances of another age, and the language of 18th-century flirtation may deceive. But the point is that although nearly all Jefferson's biographers have dismissed the suggestion, they are not very worried by it. Dumas Malone, himself the most important of them, is not altogether certain:

> "Illicit lovemaking was generally condoned in that society, as he himself had noted. If he as a widower ever engaged in it, this was the time."[5]

But the fact is that no one would have found it shocking at the time; and no one finds it shocking now. To have a brief affair with a white married woman neglected by her husband is quite a different thing to having a prolonged affair with a Negro slave and being the father of several children by her. That was to challenge a deeply felt tabu, and the language in which Jefferson's biographers deal with this subject is much more heavily charged.



It has always been an article of faith that the story which was first circulated by a political enemy during Jefferson's Presidency was a fabrication to which no decent man could give credence. Dumas Malone regards it as "wholly unwarranted."[6] But he also felt himself obliged to devote an appendix of several pages significantly headed "THE MISCEGENATION LEGEND" to its refutation.[7] The heading is important since it is clear that it is the suggestion of racial admixture —not the charge of fornication—that has been the reason for the extreme sensitivity on this matter. It is because of Mrs Brodie's own clear commitment to ideals of racial equality that she wishes to depict Jefferson as setting the tabu aside.

SHE IS NOT OF COURSE the first writer to note these facts. In his important work on race relations in the colonial and early national period, Winthrop Jordan writes:

> "the subject is an unpalatable one for many Americans: the assertion that a great national figure was involved in miscegenation . . . is one that Americans find difficult to treat as anything but a malicious accusation."[8]

Mr Jordan is not convinced (as is Mrs Brodie) that previous biographers were wrong in their conclusions. He finds Jefferson's whole attitude to women—as well as to Negroes—an ambivalent one. After a youthful rebuff, all his known affections went in the direction of married women—his wife was newly-widowed—and he seems to have had some fears of the impact on the ordered course which he craved in his life of female sexuality, unless severely controlled in marriage. When to this is added the fact that in his writings on the races, it was on the physical distinctions between White and Black women rather than on men that his writings dwell, Jefferson (as seen by Mr Jordan) becomes someone who could in the case of Sally Hemings have reacted to her combination of attractiveness and proximity in either way—by acceptance or by rejection: "Jefferson's relations with women were ambivalent, and in the Hemings situation either tendency could have prevailed. . . ."

[5] Dumas Malone, *Jefferson and the Rights of Man.* (1951), p. 72.
[6] Dumas Malone, *Jefferson and the Ordeal of Liberty* (1962), p. 210.
[7] Dumas Malone, *Jefferson, the President: First Term* (1970), appendix II. Professor Malone remains unconvinced by Mrs Brodie's arguments and has printed (*New York Times,* 18 May 1974) a letter written by Jefferson's grand-daughter, Ellen Randolph Coolidge, dismissing the Sally Hemings story.
[8] W. D. Jordan, *White over Black: American Attitudes Towards the Negro, 1550–1812* (1968), p. 464.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr Jordan's own interest in the matter was not biographical. Jefferson is interesting to him primarily for the fact that his writings and the controversies they aroused are important for an understanding of what the White society of his time felt about the Negro factor in the nation's life. How far did Jefferson's contemporaries subscribe to his view—that while Negroes were endowed with the same moral attributes as whites and hence deserved freedom and would assuredly one day receive it, they were intellectually inferior and would thus be unlikely to make much of it?

One difficulty in dealing with the problem is that American historians have not, on the whole, approached the history of slavery from the point of view of the interaction of the two races. It may be that the fact that the question was so deeply involved in the Abolitionist controversy—and that this in turn brought about the tragedy of the Civil War—has permanently affected American historiography in this field. The kind of approach that one finds in the writings on race relations in the slavery period in Brazil (which of course lasted much longer), *e.g.*, in the writings of Gilberto Freyre, has not had a North American counterpart. And even if one accepts the point of view of Freyre's critics, namely that he presents too favourable a picture of the Brazilian scene, and underestimates the extent of South American colour prejudice, he does at least ask the kind of question that is absent from most treatments of the subject in the United States. This, in turn, has led to the equally implausible idea that the history of the Negro in North America can be written as though it were self-contained.

BUT AS FAR AS THE ARGUMENT about Jefferson is concerned, the main fact is that no serious historian denies that miscegenation (especially, though not exclusively) between white slave-owners and their female slaves was widespread throughout the *ante-bellum* period. According to the 1860 census, "mulattoes" accounted for about 12% of the coloured population of the slave states. But this is regarded as clearly an underestimate, since the census-takers went on the basis of colour alone which meant that of persons of mixed blood a considerable number must have been listed as "white" or "black".[9] If Jefferson cohabited with Sally Hemings, he would not have been any more out of line with current behaviour than was his father-in-law whose daughter she probably was.

In the nature of things a matter of this kind cannot lend itself to conclusive proof. Mrs Brodie can show that the pattern of the births of Sally's children corresponds to that of Jefferson's visits to Monticello, and that he certainly could have been the father of her children (as one of them, her son Madison, was later to claim). Nor is it possible to dispute the fact that the Hemings family was favoured by Jefferson as compared with his other slaves. Further than that one cannot go—except by arguing, as does Mrs Brodie, that some of the other puzzling aspects of Jefferson's conduct become easier to explain if we accept the Sally Hemings relationship as a fact.[10]

IN ARGUING IN THIS WAY, Mrs Brodie does indeed provide some ammunition to those who reject her claim. But what must be conceded is her point that some of the historians make use in their own writings of arguments which are in effect circular; they start by assuming what they are attempting to prove. They assume that Jefferson was incapable of having a relationship of this kind and thus dismiss the evidence for it as irrelevant—instead of asking whether it would not be more logical to accept the evidence and

[9] Kenneth M. Stampp, *The Peculiar Institution: Slavery in the Ante-Bellum South* (1956), pp. 350–1. These views have been challenged by Robert William Fogel and Stanley L. Engerman who in their book, *Time on the Cross* (Boston, Little Brown, 1974) argue that the extent of miscegenation in the rural South has been exaggerated. I have not yet had an opportunity of examining their arguments or of seeing what other American scholars make of them; but I doubt whether they can make a substantial difference to our view of Jefferson's Virginia. See the review in *The Times Literary Supplement* (31 May 1974) and Professor Harry Johnson's forthcoming remarks in the next issue of *Encounter*.

[10] See the sympathetic review by Alan Green in *The Saturday Review/World*, 6 April 1974.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

then recast their image of Jefferson to take account of it. Two quotations (with my italics) illustrate the point. Professor Merrill Peterson writes:

> "unless Jefferson was capable of *slipping badly out of character* in hidden moments at Monticello, it is difficult to imagine him caught up in a miscegenous relationship."[11]

Professor Malone after dealing with the tainted source of the early allegations and of the obvious errors in some of them goes on:

> "They are distinctly *out of character*, being *virtually unthinkable* in a man of Jefferson's moral standards and habitual conduct."[12]

In other words, what is known to be true of many of Jefferson's social equals among his contemporaries *must* be ruled out in his case because it would not correspond to the morally heroic mould in which historians have chosen to cast him. The emphasis is certainly on the historians, since Mr Gore Vidal is almost certainly right in assuming that Jefferson's contemporaries did not see him or talk about him in this way.

WHAT ONE MUST THEN ASK is the strength of Mrs Brodie's case for presenting a very different Jefferson? For that is what she has endeavoured to do. Mrs Brodie argues that Merrill Peterson's picture of Jefferson is like the museum that Monticello has become—

> "ascetic, cerebral, cool and elegant. One misses the snorting horses Jefferson loved, the smell of manure, the clinking of wine-glasses, the shouts of children. The little mountain is shorn of its slave cabins, shorn too of its essential humanity."

And it is in Jefferson's humanity and the contradictions in his private and public life as well as in his efforts to resolve them that his true greatness lies. The traditional image obscures the man himself. To answer the question would involve examining a long and complex argument in almost as much detail as Mrs Brodie herself finds necessary. But it would seem not unwarrantable to look at one particular point, significant in itself as an example of Mrs Brodie's approach.

Given the other evidence for Jefferson's concern for the Hemings family, the extent to which its members remain relatively anonymous in his detailed accounts known as the "Farm Book" would seem odd. Does it mean that they were less in his mind than Mrs Brodie would have us believe? Not so. "It was", she writes,

> " a kind of automatic denial in the written record, that this slave woman and her children were important to him. Such denial was routine in the South, the accepted way of life. The denial was accepted too, though in different fashion, by the slave who was genuinely loved."

The reason is that, otherwise, parting would have been inevitable, given the written and unwritten codes of the time.

[11] Merrill D. Peterson, *Thomas Jefferson and the New Nation* (1970), p. 707. See, also, his earlier work, *The Jefferson Image in the American Mind* (1960).
[12] Dumas Malone, *Jefferson, the President: First Term*, p. 214.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> "The slave was peculiarly deprived of the right to, and even the desire for emancipation, because freedom meant the loss of the love relationship. If Jefferson had freed Sally Hemings it would have been to lose her, and it meant also that she would lose him. For although a master could carry on a liaison with a slave in relative secrecy without public censure, it was very much more difficult and socially dangerous with a free Negro. And the very act of manumission had to be a matter of public record."

Jefferson could unostentatiously allow Sally's children to depart and seek livelihoods in non-slave States, but the condition of free Negroes in the South made emancipation for their mother impossible.

CAN ONE THEN GO ON, as does Mrs Brodie, and argue that it was because of unhappiness with his own situation that Jefferson reconciled his own beliefs that emancipation would have to come, with the fact he continued to hold slaves himself; when emancipation did come it would have to mean the repatriation of the ex-slaves to their land of origin. "Perhaps", writes Mrs Brodie,

> "it was the necessity of continuing to deny so many natural rights to Sally Hemings and the necessity of rejecting and separating himself from her children, demanded by the whole white community and no doubt demanded most of all in silence by his own daughter that reinforced Jefferson's lifelong conviction that there could be no emancipation of slaves without deportation. If the hatred and tyranny and sadism of the whites would result, as he feared, in threatened slave insurrection and a war of races, loving brought no real solution either, only secrecy, denial, humiliation, guilt and loss. . . . "

There are two difficulties here. Part of the argument is once again based on the interpretation of silence. One can read Martha Jefferson's letters as implying a reproach to her father for his liaison; she does not in so many words refer to it. Again, it is arguable that the deportation argument was maintained by *others* who had no personal reason for accepting its validity.

Should one, perhaps, attach more importance to Winthrop Jordan's simpler version of Jefferson's ambivalence? Negroes were human and should not be enslaved; but in Virginia they were also property and for a man constantly under financial pressure (and eventually ruined) the disposal of a large portion of his capital without return was hardly to be contemplated. The debts he owed his fellow-whites took priority over the moral debt to his common humanity with the blacks.

What distinguishes Mrs Brodie, then, from previous writers who have discussed the Sally Hemings affair is that they thought it would *lower* Jefferson if it were true, while Mrs Brodie extends her own belief in racial equality and her own opposition to segregation to hoping that in his private, if not in his public life, Jefferson was at one with her, and therefore has a right to her admiration and affection.

SUCH A CONCLUSION leaves unanswered the question as to whether the United States can better face its past and its present with heroes who have been brought down from Valhalla and reduced to human size. It is a long-standing and unresolved debate. Gore Vidal believes that it was going on already when the last of the Founding Fathers were still about. Among the characters who flit across the New York scene in his novel is the writer Washington Irving. To someone's remark that it was splendid to have Aaron Burr still alive to give an account of "the way things really were", Irving is made to reply:

> "Really were? Yes, perhaps. Yet isn't it better that we make our own useful version of our history and put away—in the attic as it were—the sadder, less edifying details?"

Despite the popularity of Mr Vidal's novel, most Americans probably still think so.

Dialogue

Night that turns into dialogue. Sea, rain
and lightning wait for signs from the weather
station at Beit Dagan. Our obscure errands
disturb no radar screens.
Night without images. The unknown in us
like unlocated springs that feed the river current.
Night of distant bells. Let this night
go on. Let it go on. No midnight for time
that starts to be measured at midnight

David Rokeah
translated from the Hebrew by Robert Mezey

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THEATRE

Art versus Life

By John Weightman

BY A CURIOUS COINCIDENCE, David Storey's latest play, *Life Class*, is being performed in St Martin's Lane, next door to the revival of *Pygmalion*. In one work, a naked female model is in the centre of the stage most of the time, and represents the living statue that none of the would-be artists can translate into art; in the other, Eliza is the living statue who is re-fashioned by Higgins, as if it were possible for a practical artist to treat badly-processed human beings as raw material. A few hundred yards away, at the Aldwych, Tom Stoppard's *Travesties* sees the whole of life as being a kaleidoscope of inter-changeable art-forms. Faithful to his method, which consists in trying to elevate the pastiche into a creative statement, Stoppard puts James Joyce, Tristan Tzara and V. I. Lenin inside *The Importance of Being Earnest* and allows them to dialogue about the conflicting claims of art and life, as Wilde himself was so fond of doing.

Since I saw the three plays about a month ago, my head has been buzzing with the old problems: What is art? What is life? Does the term "realism" make any sense? Meanwhile, this being the university examination season, I have had to read some scores of answers, good, bad and in-different, on the same theme, and if anything they have further increased my confusion. So now, to clear the mental fog, I feel I ought to draw up a little examination paper for myself, with the chastening thought that the marking has to be left to other people.

QUESTION 1: *Explain why you found the realism of "Life Class" disappointing, after expressing approval of "The Contractor" and "The Changing Room."*

Admittedly, the play appears, at first sight, to deal with the same kind of situation. A group of people are engaged on a practical pursuit and the truth about them is meant to emerge incidentally as they carry through the *project*. In *Life Class*, instead of a gang of workmen setting up a tent or a rugby team before, during and after the match, we have a class of art-students in some provincial academy assembled on a cold winter's day to draw from the nude, under the direction of their disillusioned and sarcastic teacher. The pattern is similar to that of the other two plays: preparation for the action, the action under way, and the dismantling of the action for a return to zero; coming together in the morning, the class in operation leading to a dramatic climax, and then disruption and dispersal in the evening. The teacher allows, and perhaps encourages, some-thing to happen which causes his dismissal, so that the life class is a symbolic crisis in his life. Instead of the students succeeding in drawing the nude model, one of them leaps on to her and simulates an orgasm so convincingly that the rest of the class is momentarily taken in and shocked, and a sexually-repressed student reports the matter to the principal. Real life nudity has produced a gross physical response instead of a work of art. Since, as the teacher keeps implying in his ironical speeches, we don't really know what art is, life has, in this instance, interrupted the life class and destroyed the supposed purity and sublimity of art, by showing that a nude is a system of sex-signals to be acted on immediately, with no nonsense about transposition to a different plane.

My central disappointment with the play arises from this implied message, which is a surprisingly crude simplification of the truth about life and art. It is a fact that artists have traditionally fornicated with their models, and good luck to them, but anybody can fornicate, whereas only an artist qua artist can produce the Rokeby Venus or any other collocation of forms celebrating the poetry of sex. I wonder if Mr Storey has not been misled by the new permissiveness into putting a nude on the stage and then making too facile a use of her, charming though she is.

LINKED TO THIS is the difficulty of representing artistic creation in the theatre. Drawing, in fact, is not like putting up a tent or exhibiting the personal relationships connected with rugby foot-ball. These latter two activities belong to average living and exist in an externalised form, whereas drawing is the mysterious production of signs, the drama of which is internal. There would not really be much difference between showing a group of students supposedly making drawings which are invisible to the audience and showing another group shuffling in their seats and scratching their heads while they write examination essays. To overcome the unplayability of the situation, Mr Storey has had to emphasise the randiness and quarrelsomeness of the students; they indulge in tomfoolery, or have inopportune bowel-move-ments, which is a common human fate. But there is never any indication that they are specifically art students, *i.e.* people who, in addition to their randiness and bowel-movements, are genuinely interested in the problems of art. They are all perfectly philistine, and the only art-object they

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

produce is a hat that one of the girls has made at home. Supposing the real-life art school that Mr Storey attended was actually like this, who can blame the local education authorities if by now they have closed it down? But I cannot believe that it was. I think Mr Storey is being unrealistic in the bad sense, simply to achieve a tactical stage effect. In the most benighted educational institutions—and I have seen a few—there are always one or two teachers and pupils who save the honour of the place. Mr Storey himself, indeed, must have been one of them. The kind of art school he presents would only be appropriate in a farce, but *Life Class* is clearly meant as a serious statement.

The seriousness, alas, is little more than sentimentality. Allott, the sophisticated teacher, is a failed artist, who says he has ruined his marriage to devote himself to art, and then has found that his talent, or art itself, is non-existent. He consoles himself with the assertion that real life is his material and pads around the room creating an atmosphere with snooty-clever remarks, like any soured schoolmaster or university teacher. This is meant to be life as continuous happening. But the happening is quite lacking in salt, and even Alan Bates cannot make very much of the character, because the play does not attempt to convey why there has been tension between his private life and his art, or between art and himself. He is no more than a rather dim *fruit sec*, who is presented in an aura of unjustified approval, a sort of minor Jimmy Porter who has strayed into an arts school to continue his grumbling there.

QUESTION 2: *Why, in comparison, does "Pygmalion" seem such a solid play?*

It is stagey, of course,—just as stagey as Molière's comparable masterpiece, *L'Ecole des femmes*, in which Arnolphe tries to fashion Agnès for his own purposes, and ends up as a failed father/lover, like Higgins. But stageyness, when properly handled, is a way of being realistic by unrealistic means, as Shaw was well aware when he praised the form of *la pièce bien faite*. Higgins could not have transformed Eliza from a flower-girl into a duchess in six months, unless she had been not only a phonetic genius but also an all-round one, and had she been that, she would not have hung about being a flower-girl until Higgins bumped into her.

But the essential point is true; several Cockney chorus-girls turned themselves into ladies or duchesses over the space of a few years. All social conditioning is accidental, and our mother-tongue, like our table-manners, is not part of our given nature but an acquired characteristic. One of Shaw's basic beliefs, as a post-Nietzschean evolutionist, was that the individual should find his or her own true level and treat all social forms as provisional crystallisations, as indeed they are. This means, in a sense, that each person has to be his or her own Pygmalion or artist, refashioning the social self in external life to make it suit the given temperament. One of the jokes in the play is that Higgins can refashion Eliza, because he treats her as an automaton, like the doll in *Coppélia*, but does not see that he himself is frozen in the part of an English gentleman living on a private income and consumed by a mania for phonetics, as others are consumed by a passion for golf or rose-growing. The beauty of the situation is that he, who is not a whole person (he has a mother-fixation and is afraid of sex, as Shaw himself seems to have been), can, by the application of technical skill, allow Eliza to flower into a whole person. She does not become a duchess but a conscious human being, to whom various possibilities are open, and cannot marry either Higgins or Freddy, because they are both inadequate versions of man. The real-life art product has, as it were, transcended the artist.

The end is perhaps more ambiguous than this summary implies. Higgins is presented as being in something of a quandary: should he propose marriage to Eliza and emerge from his narrowly creative bachelordom to become involved with life in the round? He hesitates, and then he himself sets about convincing Eliza that she should be an independent individual above sex. This part doesn't ring quite true, and fits in with Shaw's general inability to believe in a full physical-cum-intellectual relationship, perhaps because of a personal twist, or perhaps because he was tainted with Victorian puritanism, which may have prompted his own *mariage blanc*. At any rate, this peculiarity seems to put *Pygmalion* a notch or two below *L'Ecole des femmes*, with its marvellously secure acceptance of all human tendencies. Arnolphe, a male chauvinist through a neurotic fear of cuckoldry, is trying to create not a complete woman but the perfect wife, and his method is to withhold education instead of providing it. His daughter/wife is meant to be pure submissive object, but she explodes into a woman through the sheer working of nature. Arnolphe is confident in his negative artistry, but nature flouts him with its positive artistry. As M. Lévi-Strauss might put it, Arnolphe and Higgins are opposites, yet in a psychological relation of cousinship.

QUESTION 3: *Can pastiche become an independent art-form? Discuss, with reference to "Travesties."*

In a sense, all art is pastiche and proceeds by cannibalisation. In real life, outside art and

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

convention, the only possibility open to the mind is blank awareness of the Absurd. To escape from the pressure of the Absurd, we grab at any given form and are exceptionally lucky if we can create a new one, or a new combination. Mr Stoppard's peculiarity is that he is not moderate in his cannibalising. He is like those legendary cooks who put a goose inside a swan, a chicken inside the goose, an ortolan inside the chicken and an olive inside the ortolan. Are we meant to attach equal importance to all the outer casings as we come to them, or to look for and carry off the olive of pure meaning? Is there an olive or has he forgotten to put it in?

About the enjoyability of the casings, there can be no doubt. Mr Stoppard has the rare gift of intellectual high spirits and he writes with the freshness that characterised the *Beyond the Fringe* quartet in their early days. It was a brilliant idea to think of James Joyce, Tristan Tzara and Lenin as being all together in the public library in Trieste during the First World War, so as to juxtapose serious avant-garde art, Dadaist non-art and political activism which looks upon art as a distraction from the serious business of refashioning life. It was equally brilliant to show them through the eyes of the unknown consular official, Henry Carr, who fell foul of Joyce in connection with an amateur performance of *The Importance of Being Earnest*. Carr is the central monologuist, like the philosopher in *Jumpers* and the Rosencrantz-Guildenstern couple in the earlier play; he is remembering the whole thing in seedy retirement and, by his ramblings, uncertainties and sudden bursts of bad temper, illustrates the unreliability of history, which can present any of these famous men as a fascinating person or a repellent one.

This is the oft-repeated Existentialist point: we live only in the present, and the past is a perpetual recreation. The past, in fact, is always art, myth or retrospective extrapolation, and so our hold on "real life" is always much more precarious than most of us care to think. Mr Stoppard conveys this idea beautifully in Carr's monologues, which are given a superlative performance by John Wood, a deliciously ham virtuoso display on a par with Michael Hordern's unforgettable rendering of the linguistic philosopher in *Jumpers*. Also, by interweaving the action with parodies of *The Importance of Being Earnest*, in which Carr is Algernon and Tzara is Jack, he made me realise clearly for the first time that, in this one great work which is so superior to his sentimental plays, Wilde is a true Absurdist. The title can be given a deeper meaning. Earnestness, or intelligent moral seriousness, is the human quality most difficult to sustain in the Absurd world, where nature itself is both ruthless and frivolous. The reason why Shaw was cool about the play was probably not professional jealousy, but his instinctive rejection of the Absurd in favour of earnest evolutionary faith.

By the way in which he juggles with Lenin, Joyce and Tzara, Mr Stoppard shows that he has a point of view. He is in favour of genuine art, represented by Joyce, against aleatory art, minimal art or non-art—all those activities which blur the distinction between art and life—represented by Tzara. He is also against Lenin, who chose to disregard art as a disturbing luxury, being too obtuse to understand that art, in the last resort, is the most profoundly serious human occupation above the subsistence level. As somebody remarks at one point: "If you can't be an artist, you may as well be a politician!" It is perhaps because Mr Stoppard is in love with art and not quite sure that he himself is a true artist that he loads every rift with other men's ore, and dazzles with quotations and imitations.

ALTHOUGH I LAUGHED all the way through, I don't think the extravaganza quite comes off as an autonomous creation. For instance, the character of Joyce is a failure, a sort of blank, because it is easier to show how non-art is silly and political dogmatism limited than it is to explain how good art comes to be good. In any case, I wonder if Mr Stoppard really likes Joyce. It may be significant that the one major quotation in the play is not from Joyce but from Shakespeare; "Shall I compare thee to a summer's day?" rings out with triumphant roundness of tone and produces a catch in the throat in the middle of the fun; and when the sonnet is chopped up by Tzara into a slightly suggestive aleatory text, the joke falls quite flat. Similarly, a few bars of the *Appassionata* in the Lenin episode are enough to produce a religious hush, as if we had been suddenly transported to a different dimension. I remember a similar feeling while watching *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern*. I wanted the play to stop and the excerpts from *Hamlet* to continue. Perhaps this indicates that Mr Stoppard has not yet given the olive of meaning the full flavour of truly personal art.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NOTES & TOPICS

Letter from Berlin

Death of a Nightingale

HE HAD BEEN complaining of loneliness. On Mother's Day three weeks earlier he had entertained his mother from Bad Neuenahr, with coffee and cakes in his tiny flat in Neukölln. He was last seen in a bed-and-breakfast hotel on the Clayallee, Berlin, about 4 p.m. on Tuesday 4 June. Eight hours later he was dead with a gaping bullet-wound in the forehead, lying in the Brandenburg sand of a lonely woodland path near the banks of the "*Krumme Lanke.*" He was found by American soldiers on their way to a night exercise called "Hunt 44" but none of them understood German well enough to catch any of the dying young man's last gasping words. In his pockets he had 12·50 DM and an identity card showing that he was Ulrich Schmücker, aged 22. In Berlin police headquarters the criminal police passed the case to their colleagues of the "Political Crimes" section.

For Schmücker was a well-known figure from the turbulent spring of 1972 when the "bomb rage" had been the order of the day in both West Germany and West Berlin. The police immediately suspected that the ex-explosives specialist of the Berlin anarchist movement known as "*2 June*" might have been liquidated by his former accomplices. Before their suspicions had time to turn into certainty, however, the "*2 June Movement*" spoke for itself on the Thursday. At 8 a.m. on 6 June twelve partially hand-written sheets of paper were delivered to the German Press Agency in Hamm, Westphalia; in these certain unknown persons, with the macabre arrogance of their prototypes—from the Baader/Meinhof gang to the Palestinian "*Black September*"—claimed "responsibility" for the murder of their former associate; Schmücker had been condemned to death, they said, by a *Volkstribunal*, a "People's Court", and had been executed as a "traitor and counter-revolutionary."

SCHMÜCKER'S DEATH was that of a "*Nachtigall*", a "nightingale", as those who turn State's Evidence are known in jailbird jargon. After his arrest in May 1972 Schmücker had done more than his share of "singing" to the investigating authorities. He had given away details of names, plans and methods of his group, a windfall for the anti-terrorist detectives as a result of which some of their wild-goose chases became for a while quite rewarding.

WHO WAS Ulrich Schmücker, and why did he fall victim to the first *Feme-Mord*, Germany's special kind of political revenge murder, in the recent history of the Bombsters in the New Left? The file on Schmücker presents him as a sensitive young man with grey-green eyes and reddish-brown hair, of high IQ and with rather good school marks on his *Abitur*. His 61-year-old mother says of him: "He was an idealist. He wanted to make the world better. He wanted to help other people. He had literally given away his shirt to someone in need. . . ." Shortly before he died he had reverted to a proper job of work and was earning a decent salary; and he had just been paid 200 marks by Schering of Berlin for acting as a guinea-pig for skin ointments. Shortly before his liquidation he had told his mother of a new youth group in which he was working on "child education" but from which he was expelled as a "traitor" (on a tip, he thought, from his former "comrades").

According to his father, a qualified sports instructor in the Bad Neuenahr academic *Gymnasium*, Schmücker wanted to enter the church. On leaving school he was given a scholarship to America and passed the examination in German Studies with a "*sehr gut.*" His experiences in America seem to have had a powerful effect upon him and to have turned him into a natural recruit for the anarchist cells on Germany's campuses. He had witnessed incidents of racial discrimination which had made a deep impression on him: apparently he had seen some of his fellow-students being beaten merely because they were coloured. . . .

On his return from the U.S.A. at the end of 1971 he studied German at West Berlin's Free University, and there he came into close contact with the new apostles of violence. He became involved in a maze of Red Cells, Kommandos, boycott tactics and riot strategies.

This was the time when the Berlin "*2 June Movement*"—named after the date of death of a student named Benno Ohnesorg who was shot

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on 2 June 1967 during a Berlin riot on the occasion of the visit of the Shah of Persia—began to establish itself. It worked under cover and took as its model the Baader/Meinhof gang which by this time (end of 1971) was almost entirely behind bars. Its purpose was to become a miniature edition of "*B/M*", to instil fear into all sections of the "Establishment", and to change Germany's capitalist system through the pressure of violence and chaos.

Schmücker went about with fairly experienced young anarchist semi-professionals: the students Harald Sommerfeld (aged 19), Wolfgang Knupe (23), Werner Sauber (27), Till Meyer (29), Ralf "Bruno" Reinders (25), and the kindergarten teacher Inge Viett (30).[1] Some of these are still in jail, some have managed to escape, and warrants are out for the arrest of others on counts of bank robbery and manslaughter. Ulrich Schmücker soon became one of the movement's "experts." His specialist field was the preparation of explosives and bombs.

SCHMÜCKER HAD ONLY hearsay evidence about one of "2 June's" worst crimes (although after turning State's Evidence later, he "unloaded" on the subject). On 2 February 1972 Comrades Räther and Sommerfeld together with Fräulein Viett planted a bomb in the grounds of the British yacht club in Berlin—"as an answer to the night of Londonderry." The little "commando" raid cost Erwin Beelitz, a 66-year-old Gatow boatman, his life. On 4 April, after abortive raids on post offices and bank branches around Berlin, Inge Viett and a few other comrades carried out a successful hold-up on the Britzer Diskonto-Bank, and got away with 29,400 marks.

Schmücker gave shelter to all three (plus their loot) in his Berlin flat. Then a week later he himself, forming part of the party this time, placed a bomb in the Harnack-Haus, the US Army officer's club in Dahlem. The fact that it did not go off at all obviously affected his image as an expert. To make matters worse, on 5 May a similar "engine" failed to explode at the Turkish Consulate-General in Berlin-Charlottenburg.

But the group was even more ambitious. Things were getting somewhat hot for "2 June" in Berlin, however, and so (according to a subsequent record of interrogation) they turned their minds to "kidnapping representatives of the Press, Industry and Politics." All agreed on one drastic thing—that if the ultimatum were not kept, then they had to be ruthless about killing the hostages. First, however, they decided, "as a protest against the execution of Turkish students", to blow up the Turkish Embassy in Bonn. Schmücker, who was the "2 June" contact man to Arab guerrilla groups, paid 5,000 DM for explosives obtained from one secret Arab arsenal.

Before this plan could be put into effect, however, Schmücker, Sommerfeld, Knupe and Inge Viett were caught up in a police dragnet like the merest dilettantes. A routine check in Bad Neuenahr, Schmücker's home town, trapped the entire gang sleeping in a parked Fiat—packed with bombs, detonators, walkie-talkies, false number plates, and house-breaking tools. At his trial before the Berlin High Court early in 1973 Schmücker said: "I am glad that we were caught. We had a lot of other plans, and that would have made things much worse for me. . . ." He had only taken the road to Bonn, he said, "because I was the only one with any knowledge of explosives."

NINE MONTHS LATER Schmücker gave the court a calm, factual, concise account of the anarchist gang's methods; and it was one of the most revealing confessions made by a terrorist in the dock.

> "I have changed my views fundamentally. It has become clear to me that violence only achieves the exact opposite of that intended. . . ."

From "nightingale" Schmücker the public heard how the gang dealt with explosives, get-away cars, weapons, stolen money, radios, and a host of "sister" organisations. People learnt that, through Arab contact men, German anarchists on the run could go into temporary hiding in Lebanon or Iraq for a sum of 3,000 DM (the price at that time), and that military training for one *Genosse* cost 10,000 DM. On behalf of his comrades Schmücker himself had paid Arabs 15,000 DM for personal weapons, 5,000 DM for automatic rifles, 15,000 DM for explosives and 5,000 DM for hand grenades. He divulged for the record the names of his comrades and their various assassination plans, as if intent on eliminating as quickly as possible the "movement" which had made him its official bombster.

The court rewarded his candour: he was given 2½ years for complicity in attempted violent crime and membership in a criminal association. A recommendation was made, however, for his immediate release and remission of sentence taking account of the time spent awaiting trial. The presiding judge was evidently somewhat uneasy. In his summing up he pointed out that Schmücker had put himself at considerable risk with his confession, and that he might have to reckon with retribution from either his fellow-conspirators or the Arab underground.

At this point at least two hard-core members of the "*2 June Movement*" were still at liberty:

[1] On the special note of a *Kindergärtnerin* in German anarchist circles, see the portrait of "Margit" in Melvin J. Lasky, "Lady on the Barricades", ENCOUNTER, July 1972.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Michael Baumann (27) nicknamed "Bommi", and Peter Knoll (25) nicknamed "Knolle." Moreover, on 20 July 1973, shortly after being sentenced, Inge Viett succeeded in escaping from the Lehrtestrasse women's prison in Berlin. Not only on her account but also because of the detailed information he had given about the Arab underground in the Federal Republic, Schmücker had to assume on his release that his life as a free man was on the precarious side.

PERHAPS FOR THIS REASON he went underground, initially without trace. On 23 May 1973 the Moabit Security Court which was trying Kurt Harald Sommerfeld, a member of "2 June" with a long list of charges against him, waited in vain for its witness Schmücker. What this lanky young man with shoulder-length hair did until the day, a few weeks ago, when he called up his mother in Bad Neuenahr, remains a mystery. Once he had played his part, the police lost sight of him; they considered him "small fry." None of the informants known to the police had spoken to him before that Tuesday night when he made his last excursion to the "*Krumme Lanke.*" According to his mother he said over the telephone: "Come to Berlin. I'm so lonely. . . ."

The riddle of his violent end is not solved by the letter from the "Black June Commando" claiming responsibility for his execution. Here is the new "rhetoric of blood" with which Sartre and Fanon—with help from Bakunin and Brecht—have beguiled a whole ideological generation. Even the announcement of a summary death-sentence was clad in the mumbo-jumbo jargon of Marxian pamphleteering. In the letter given to the *Frankfurter Rundschau* (of all the West-German dailies the most "sympathetic" to the New Left), the leaders of "2 June" wrote:

> "In order to bring a balance between the forces of production and the productive relations within the revolutionary movement, we have logically disposed of the case of Ulrich Schmücker. . . . A traitor within the ranks of the Revolution can only find his own certain death."

When they went on to quote Brecht as a justifying authority, the style was a bit better even if the sentiment was as barbaric: ". . . He must disappear, and totally. For we must get back to our tasks. And since we can't leave him be and we can't take him along, we must therefore execute him. . . ."

If the "Movement's" claim is truth and not fantasy, why did the murderers wait a whole year before "condemning" and liquidating Schmücker? Did Schmücker have any contact with his former *Genossen* after his release? Only the answers to these questions can clear up the reason for the death of Ulrich Schmücker, the accused who turned witness for the prosecution. According to one Berlin police inspector who handled the case, Schmücker found the attempt to live "a bourgeois life" "completely impossible." He said he wanted to live either as "a *Terrorist* or a *V-Mann*", that is, as an agent of the revolution or as a double-agent. Which of these motives compelled him to look leftwards again and to try to go home to his old comrades? Red nightingales are mysterious and tragic birds.

Friedhelm Kemna

Last Thoughts on "the Generation Gap"

Dr. Mead's Mistake — By GOLO MANN

IT WAS Professor Alexander Mitscherlich who first drew my attention to Margaret Mead's essay *Culture and Commitment, "A Study of the Generation Gap."* The anthropologist's thesis is doubtless well known; it is one of the numerous new ways of interpreting human history, of which there are so many nowadays and which tend to resemble each other, without being quite identical.

In short, there are three types of civilisation. (*1*) The "post-figurative" is dominated by the dimension of the Past. Present and future are "figured" in terms of the past, and are modelled on it. The grandfathers, the forbears rule. Things will be thus-and-so tomorrow because they were thus yesterday, because they have always been so, and always should be. The ways of thinking of those South Sea communities of which Dr Mead possesses a profound knowledge is decidedly post-figurative. It might be added that so was the way of thinking of the rulers and theorists of the Roman Republic, and this is what brought about the Republic's downfall. There was no consciousness of historical change which corresponded to the immense growth of imperial power, to the immense changes in the fabric of

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

society. This was bound to end badly.

With regard to the European Middle Ages, in which thinking was also post-figurative, Professor Herbert Grundmann has posed the question. How could such a closed culture, so static in respect to its vision of itself and its will, have progressed to a dynamism which eventually swept all the nations of the world along with it? His speculative answer runs: the conceptions which the Middle Ages had of themselves (and which were to be valid forever) never corresponded to reality. They were in movement in so far—and because—they were striving for a correct and enduring identity. They sought the Holy Grail, and found something quite different.

Then came (*2*) the "co-figurative" civilisation. Its dimension is the Present. Generations live side by side, are differentiated by their experiences, but in such a way that they still understand one another. The authority of the ancestors, *mos majorum*, is not taken to be valid. The past is not oppressive, and the future no burning problem.

This description—which I want to keep short—clearly recalls that which David Riesman (in *The Lonely Crowd*) defines as "other-directed." Riesman considered the epoch he was defining to be a rather long one, identical with at least the second half of our century. To Margaret Mead it was only a brief transitional phase. This is correct at least in so far as Riesman had no idea whatever of the world-wide "Revolt of Youth", which started some ten years after the publication of his book.[1] What omniscient sociologist could have suspected that a "strangely silent generation" would give way to such noisier types?

SO NOW, FOR THE FIRST TIME in 50,000 years of human history, we are living in (*3*) a "pre-figurative" civilisation. Its dimension is the Future. Its carriers are the young who were born after the Second World War. The old, yes, they are carrying it too, but in a different, a quite different sense. They are pioneers, Immigrants in a New Land, and immigrants usually have a hard time of it. However hard they try they cannot cast off their memories, cannot forget the habits of life and mental attitudes they have brought with them from the old country. "Whoever they are, these immigrants grew up under a sky across which no satellite had ever flashed. Their perception of the past was an edited version of what had happened. . . ."

Thus physicists like Edward Teller could see in nuclear warfare only a new, and not so very terrible variation of War in general, which is eternal. Thus, when the first Atom Bomb exploded in 1945 very few people realised that all mankind was entering a new era; consequently, the population explosion was seen as merely an intensification of what had always existed. And so on. There is still continuity; past, present and future run into one another seamlessly. In order to master the tasks of the future, general and un-coercive reforms will suffice, as they did in Victorian England or in Franklin Roosevelt's America. It is still possible to learn from the past, to draw parallels, to become familiar with the unfamiliar by putting it in its historical place.

THE YOUNG think differently. From the outset they have known and want to know nothing but "the new country." They know, and they feel more acutely than they know, that it is a land without compare. "The idea of orderly, developmental change is lost for this generation of young, who cannot take over the past from their elders, but can only repudiate what their elders are doing now. The past for them is a colossal, unintelligible failure. . . ." And precisely because it has led to what exists today, a repugnant, shameful present, which on top of everything else is threatened by the danger of total destruction.

So it is that two generations are living together who do not understand each other, have nothing to say to one another, and tend to remain each in its solitude. "Today, nowhere in the world are there elders who know what the children know. . . ." The experiences of the old cannot be passed on. The only thing they can teach their children is not to ask questions. What is the sense of asking questions when the person asked has to remain mute? ". . . as long as any adult thinks that he, like the parents and teachers of old, can become introspective, invoke his own youth to understand the youth before him, then he is lost." It was this sentence in particular, strongly supported by Dr Mitscherlich, that impelled me to read Dr Mead's book.

And I found it completely erroneous.

However much praise Mrs Mead's passionate attempt to understand the other, the incomprehensible generation, may deserve, she has exaggerated—and in a way that used to be customary among Germans, not among Anglo-Saxons. In so doing she has impaired whatever truth there may be in her argument.

TO BEGIN WITH a problem that is not central, but is nevertheless relevant. Are there really such things as "generations", in view of the fact that children are not born every thirty years (thirty years used to be considered a generation) but every year and every hour? Where does the

[1] See also David Riesman's article in ENCOUNTER, "The Uncommitted Generation" (November 1960).

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

younger generation begin, where does it end? It begins, according to Dr Mead's conclusion, in 1945. What about those children who were born during the War or shortly before it? When will those born in 1945 cease to be young? How, for a start, will they get on with those born in 1960? After all, those born in 1945 were twelve years old on the day on which the first *Sputnik* appeared; they were very familiar with a sky "across which a satellite had flashed." Strictly speaking, there are generations only within a single family; and even then subtle distinctions must be made.

I myself was born in 1909, my youngest brother and sister in 1918 and 1919. We obviously belong to the same generation. Nevertheless, there are differences of perspective, determined by the year in which one "came into the world." I lived through the First World War and have vivid memories of it. I actually lived through the end of the long peace, the last years of the Hohenzollern monarchy, the spuriously gilded Wilhelmian era that was really pre-democratic. These were the earliest impressions which leave the deepest mark, and to which my brother and sister were not exposed—to which they would not have been exposed even if they were only seven years younger than I. For during its first two years a child makes no observations relating to society; this does not begin until it is three or four.

WHAT I AM GETTING AT is this: the dualism of the generations so impressively and so passionately described by Dr Mead does not exist. The reality, as regards differences of age and experience, is incomparably more finely shaded—and it is a good thing for us that it is!

But if we compare the very old (let us say my contemporaries) with the very young (let us say those in their twenties) there arises the question: Who is, and who can be, more acutely aware of what is new? what is without historical parallel in our situation? The simplest answer dodges the problem; it depends on the individual case. There are people with a greater tendency to reflect, more sensitive people, in every age-group. This is undeniable, but it evades the question. I would venture the general thesis: he who has lived through the changes of the last quarter of a century as a mature person, who lived through them with astonishment, with suffering—and suffering seems to sharpen sensitivities—has become more aware. The historical temperament is not one that has to close itself off from the future and from what emerges as radically new.

I OFFER A MODEST example of this. Ten years ago I attacked and tried to refute the apologist for the innocuous nature of nuclear warfare, Herman Kahn, and in a manner to which this pseudo-scholar, this "Clausewitz of the Nuclear Age", has (unfortunately) rarely been subjected. Similarly, it is just not true that only "very few" failed to understand the searing message of Hiroshima. There has been enough earnest writing concerning this crime for the present, if not more than enough, for there is a kind of moral eloquence which conceals the danger that is to be exorcised. In this case, fortunately, it was never completely concealed. Politicians walked the old paths of power politics, the paths of the past; but they did not walk them to their logical end. So-called grounds for war, any one of which would have sufficed in the past to make war "inevitable", combined and intersected by the dozen. They were somehow prevented from taking effect. In certain military (and even civilian) circles there were people who believed in the wisdom of Messrs Teller, Kahn, and Co. but never seriously enough to put their shaky theories to the test. He who knows no past understands neither the reality of his present in its distinctiveness, nor the necessity of the future. He may then hopefully imagine it possible "to begin all over again" and that the whole of human history is "a colossal, unintelligible failure." The hope is an unreal one, condemned to emptiness; and the peremptory verdict is devoid of all meaning.

Margaret Mead's comparison between the old and immigrants in a New Country is a striking metaphor. Again we must ask, since when have we all been "immigrants"? *Historia non facit saltus*: history does not take leaps, even if it sometimes looks like it. Where is the dividing line between the "scientific revolution" (which according to Dr Mead, began around 1945) and its predecessor, the "industrial revolution"? Everything nowadays is either "*post*" or "*late*": post-industrial, post-religious, late-idealistic, late-bourgeois, late-capitalist. As far as the post-industrial age is concerned, for the present I still see industry all around me, including the "tourist industry."

IN REALITY, THOSE OF US who were as young in the 1920s as the youth of today, already felt ourselves to be forced emigrants. And if we lacked historical instinct, authors like Oswald Spengler and Ernst Jünger at least achieved this much: they made menacing new ground clearly visible to us. How sadly aware was the 25-year-old of the changes that the sociologist Alfred Weber (an old man at the time and by no means a youth "born in the new country") penetratingly described in 1950 as an *Abschied von der bisherige Geschichte*, a Farewell to History. . . . In 1927

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

we expected of a Second World War (and it was sure to come) what today we expect of a Third. Along with others, Bertrand Russell was our mentor. Naturally we knew nothing of Atom Bombs or Earth Satellites, with the result that our picture of the Apocalypse remained somewhat unscientifically vague. What we talked about were still undiscovered poison gases, chemical and biological warfare, "conventional" bombing—and Dresden and Viet Nam have shown that these means of destruction can be as "new" as the nuclear ones. But that is not my point; deep down and at bottom, we knew all about it, and that wasn't astrology.

What I am saying is that he is not "lost" who tries to understand the young people of today by invoking his own youth. But there does remain the question: Is it practically advisable to keep telling our sons and grandsons of events in our own lifetimes that are "like" their own experiences? In fact it has never been very advisable since the withering away of a "post-figurative" civilisation. Not because the memories of the old were out-of-date—as though, for example, the conflict between radical academics and moderate practical men from the trade unions (say, among German Social Democrats) were not precisely as old as the socialist movement itself—but because every generation (no, every individual) feels and wishes to feel that its own experience is unique: both in the personal realm (childhood, puberty, love, success and failure, illness and growing old) and in the historical sense. For this reason alone tact and restraint in this dialogue are called for on the part of the old—today as the day before yesterday.

THAT "A DIALOGUE" must be possible, despite the abyss separating the participants, is in the final analysis Margaret Mead's optimistic conclusion. The role of Cassandra, she writes, is a useful one only if the prophet takes steps to prevent the fulfilment of her gloomy prophecies. Very good. Only I wish that, in her stock-taking, Cassandra had kept a better sense of proportion.

"The breakdown of the family is more apparent in the West than in the East." The Breakdown? When I look around in my personal circle I see, more often than not, fairly happy young families; I see children who are more relaxed, freer, friendlier in their attitude to their parents than they were in my day. Are there fathers who would still dare to reproach their sons, who (as we all know) "didn't ask to be born", with "doing nothing but living off the old man"?

Sweeping judgments—our now elderly anthropologist is only too fond of them. Her central assertion, presented with many variations, is this.

Harvard

Shelley

The Golden Years
Kenneth Neill Cameron

The last eight years of Shelley's short but hectic career, during which he produced all of his later masterpieces, were critical ones, both personally and artistically. Kenneth Neill Cameron offers a stimulating assessment of these two strands of Shelley's life, doing full justice to the biographical aspects and painstakingly examining the prose works and poems of the period.
£10.00

Season of Youth

The Bildungsroman from Dickens to Golding
Jerome H. Buckley

The novel of growing up and finding one's place in the world is the subject of Jerome Buckley's new book. It is the first full-scale study of the Bildungsroman in the English tradition.
£6.00

A Poet's Journal

Days of 1945–1951
George Seferis

This diary, composed during some of Seferis's most turbulent years, permits us to enter the mind and spirit of one of the twentieth century's greatest writers. A unique record of perceptions, reflections and sensations of great poetic value, it is here published for the first time in English.
£4.00

Moments of Vision

The Poetry of Thomas Hardy
Paul Zietlow

Professor Zietlow, breaking with sombre interpretations of the past, offers a sweeping view of Hardy's achievement as a poet, based on sympathetic, inter-related readings of a broad selection of his more than nine hundred poems.
£5.50

Harvard University Press
126 Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A "revolt of youth" is going on "right around the world", from San Francisco across Eastern America to Western Europe, also (beneath the heavy cover of the government) in Eastern Europe, and all the way to Japan. Everywhere there are regional causes, specific to the area. They are superficial, coincidental, more apparent than real; and the common denominator has now been found: the "revolt of the young", those born in the "new country", against the old immigrants who still sit at the levers of power and cannot rid themselves of concepts brought with them from the motherland. "There may be something in it," as Theodore Fontane used to say, "but there's nothing there that's quite true."

Where do we get our certainty that collective movements must always have a rational cause in keeping with their weight and their effects? All around us, more often than not, there is selfish, irrational behaviour that is by no means dictated by great ideas or by logical reasoning. In our own souls, if we scrutinise them (or they are scrutinised by others), it is most likely the same. Why, then, should we be so sure that in collectivities, which after all are made up of individuals and are incited and led by individuals, things are so different? What right have we to ascribe a singleness of cause, consequence, and aim to a vast complex of strivings and struggles—those that are historically unique as well as those that are abstract concepts ("the French Revolution", "Nationalism")—simply because they have been given a single name? If all my study of history had led to one all-encompassing insight it would be a negative one. I have been forced to become sceptical about the concept of causation derived from the scholastic dogma of the sufficient cause, sceptical above all about monistic causation, and the unequivocal character of events and movements.

What do the way-out California readers of Hermann Hesse at, say, Berkeley, have in common with young German Spartakists, Marxist-Leninists, *Stamokaps* and Maoists? What do the latter have in common with the members of the underground youth opposition in the Communist countries, who yearn for more freedom and not at all for another doctrinaire despotism (and also, and especially, for greater prosperity)? Don't they in fact yearn for those very things that *our* revolutionary youth possesses (if perhaps in excess), and despises because it possesses?

How far is the terrorism at German universities to be explained in the grandiose terms in which Dr Mead explains it, and how far are quite different impulses at work? For example, overstimulated high spirits—the desire to exercise power—wilful blindness—childish delight in tormenting the easy-going representatives of an unattentive state—venting one's own rage (or perhaps *machismo*)? Here are gratifications that have very little indeed to do with being "born in the new country."

It was not I, but the Marxian philosopher Jürgen Habermas, who first spoke of a "Left Fascism" in the universities. What we have experienced since this phrase was coined, and what is being vainly glossed over by officials and commentators, has confirmed the accuracy of Habermas' phrase in a far more grievous manner than its author could have foreseen. Even among the more serious Young Socialists, how much genuine love of mankind is there? how much real sympathy with the "toiling masses"? how much deep concern about threatening dangers? And how much crass calculation is there in their struggle for recognition and for power—which the young are no longer content to gain, after years of grinding effort, at a late peak in their lives, but want to have *now* "at a stroke", or at least by the time they are thirty-five?

Historians tend, and always have tended, to identify men with ideas, as though we had all stepped into reality out of text-books of cultural history or sociology. They have devoted too little of their attention to a chronic fanaticism that desires only itself, that adopts or utilises any random content as the opportunity of the day offers.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS & WRITERS

Pessimism & Pineapples

Arnold Bennett—By P. N. Furbank

Margaret Drabble has written a biography of Arnold Bennett which is sober, solid and workmanlike like the traditional notion of his novels (though actually I slightly question their solidity).[1] Her impulse to write it sprang, she tells us, from a lifelong appetite for Bennett's work, extending to practically everything he wrote. Also, to a degree, from self-identification.

> My mother's family came from the Potteries, and the Bennett novels seem to me to portray a way of life that still existed when I was a child, and indeed persists in certain areas. My own attitudes to life and work were coloured by many of the same beliefs and rituals, though they were further in the past for me, but as Bennett knew all too well they are attitudes that die hard. He might have been surprised to find how closely I identify with them, after two or three generations of startling change. So, like all books, this has been partly an act of self-exploration.

It is a "critical" biography in the old style, with regular synopses and critiques of the novels; the kind, too, which draws surmises from the novels when the facts run thin, or—a favourite device—asks rhetorical questions: "an operation in Paris (did she not trust English doctors?) for Marguerite", etc. The surmising runs into trouble every now and then, as when Margaret Drabble argues thus: Bennett's wife was fond of reciting in public; presumably Bennett cannot have liked this, though he never said so, or he would have used recitations as incidents in his novels. Too much of the dog that didn't bark in the night in this. But plot-synopses, which one skims, and surmises, which one greets with caution, are not, after all, so easily dispensed with. As Henry James says, artists are awkward creatures to biographise, for they have their back turned to us when practising their art. And there is much that is rewarding in this biography. Margaret Drabble tells us things that Reginald Pound, in his *Life* published in 1952, did not, and could not, deal with. We get a very well-drawn portrait of Bennett's wife, Marguerite Soulié, who was a handful, indeed more than a handful, and the kind of wife famous writers attract, those with frustrated "artistic" leanings. It is a tribute to Bennett, I think, that the marriage though it turned out badly, did not turn out tragically, so that after their separation Marguerite continued to think of herself, and write about herself, as his wife. There is a lovely snapshot of her and Bennett in middle age in this book, standing side by side, heavily hatted, on the tennis court. They are exactly the same height and stand their ground separately but firmly, Bennett practically swallowing his moustache with his "don't-try-to-come-it-over-me" expression.

Margaret Drabble has also talked at length with and learned much of great interest from Dorothy Cheston, the young actress with whom Bennett lived in his later years. The story of his fathering a daughter by her in late middle age is cheering. Never was there such an arranger, such an organiser of the twenty-four hours of the day, and he fits fatherhood into his life with the same cheerful competence as his piano-playing, meditation, calligraphy, and study of Herbert Spencer. We get a striking picture from Margaret Drabble's pages of the rigidity of Bennett's character, his determination to be self-sufficient, to dictate to his mind what it should and should not think about, and to "come to a definite arrangement" with his own energy. She sees this, no doubt rightly, as having been strengthened by his cruel rebuff in 1906 by an American girl, Eleanor Green. Certainly it grew with the years, and it connects with the fascination that visible organisation—the working of great hotels and department stores—had for him. There was a penalty to pay for it, it appears. In his last months a mad obstinacy overtook him, driving him, though an insomniac and hypersensitive to noise, to take a flat immediately over Baker Street railway station.

No doubt then, but that this is a worth-while and rewarding book. Yet I feel it is not exactly the book I want about Bennett. It does not quite bring

[1] *Arnold Bennett*. By Margaret Drabble. Weidenfeld & Nicolson, £4.95.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one into intimacy with him, nor on the other hand does it remove one far enough to reveal his picturesqueness. (Though, to be fair, in order not to duplicate the work of Reginald Pound, Margaret Drabble has deliberately underplayed the later, more picturesque years, in favour of the earlier and provincial ones.) To put it another way, the air is too dry, there are too few problems. Bennett, the drift is, wrote *this* novel, which was very fine, and *that* novel, which was not quite so good, and at his best he shows "creative imagination at its most powerful" and vies with, or surpasses, Dickens. ("... at times I find his protests about social conditions more moving than Dickens's, and his irony more delicately judged.") It sounds as though we all agreed what novels are and what life is and have no need to turn aside and brood on mysteries. Dickens, Maupassant, Bennett and Margaret Drabble herself are engaged on the same well-understood task: one observes some life, one feels, one invents, and then one puts it all down on paper as well as one can. The problems of art and the problems of life hardly change for a professional novelist; his is one of those hallowed craft-traditions like sail-making or designing clocks.

How reassuring if it were so. But things like the "death of a novel" or the "downgoing of the West" do obtrude, and I cannot share this timeless view of Bennett. He, and all he stood for in fiction, looks strange and remote and fascinating to me, and I want this strangeness put in focus. It is a strangeness to do with class, Edwardianism and the meeting of French and English culture. There is a good phrase in Margaret Drabble's book to the effect that Bennett was not interested in money for its own sake: what he valued was his own earning capacity, and "the continual surprise of being a wealthy man." "Continual surprise"—how that phrase rings in the ear as an expression of Bennett's enterprise as a novelist and the enterprise of so many of his fellow-writers. They were writers haunted by bad conscience. They felt uneasily in their hearts that most human life was trivial and that they despised it, yet their function as novelists was to show a romance and "glory" in it. This was the lifelong endeavour of G. K. Chesterton, and, in their own way, of Wells, Forster and Barrie.

FOR BENNETT this effort of continual surprise, bouncing oneself into visions of glory in the banal, was a matter of conscious faith—a faith which he identified, confusingly, with the theories of French naturalist fiction. He asserted that his calling as a writer was to find romance in the "Pentonville omnibus." "At bottom I am proudly content with the Pentonville omnibus", he wrote to Frank Harris in 1908. "If I cannot take a Pentonville omnibus and show it to be fine, then I am not a fully equipped artist. (And I *am*.)" The "fully-equipped artists" to whom he went to school, however, were the Goncourts and Maupassant. And the guiding impulse of the Goncourts and Maupassant, as of so many French writers since Flaubert, was something very different: it was a bitter hatred of the *bourgeois* and the *petit-bourgeois*. In so far as they showed compassion, as they often and magnificently did, it was a rueful compassion, inspired by the knowledge of how much they, and everyone, were a *bourgeois* or a *petit-bourgeois* at heart. Their compassion sprang from an indignation at the futility of most lives in modern society. The compassion of Arnold Bennett worked differently. It proceeded from a generous wish to deny the futility of commonplace lives. The truth is he detested the Potteries and the life he would have lived had he stayed among them: it was the burning desire of his youth to escape, and he could hardly bear to revisit there. The task he set himself in his literary life, however, was to find fineness and glory in what he had left behind. Hence, I feel, a great oddness and stress of contradiction in his tone.

The general view that *The Old Wives' Tale* is his masterpiece seems to me correct, for it is a deeply appealing novel; but even here, though his model was Maupassant's *Une Vie*, Bennett's Englishness and Edwardianism is clear on every page. In some ways the connection between the novels is very close, closer than he may have realised himself. He was probably unconscious of his borrowing in the following:

> *Maupassant:* She [the heroine, Jeanne's, mother] never lost a chance of speaking of "her" hypertrophy and talked of it so often that it seemed as if the disease were peculiar to her and belonged to her as something unique to which no one else had a right. The baron spoke of "my wife's hypertrophy" and Jeanne of "mama's hypertrophy" as they might say her dress or hat or umbrella.
>
> *Bennett:* The sciatica was a dear enemy of long standing, always affectionately referred to by the forgiving Constance as "*my* sciatica"; the rheumatism was a newcomer, unprivileged, spoken of by its victim apprehensively yet disdainfully as "this *rheumatism*".

Nevertheless the contrast between the two novels is striking. For, as I have said, Bennett is out to find "romance" in the quotidian; and this may mean romance for his characters, or romance only for us, or something in between.

The book is very different from Maupassant's, of course, in being a nostalgic "period" novel, evoking the recent past with Thackerayan affection: and in this respect, of course, the "romance" is solely for us. So far, however, as his characters are concerned the main, and almost the sole,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

source of romance and glory is adolescence. The moments in life which seem to Bennett inspiring, in all his novels, are those when the young say to themselves that, at last, they are "living", they have entered life's drama, they are learning the meaning of words they have hitherto merely paid lip-service to. Here is Sophia in *The Old Wives' Tale*, after her second meeting with the fascinating Gerald Scales:

> She was drunk; thoughts were tumbling about in her brain like cargo loose in a rolling ship. Her entire conception of herself was being altered; her attitude towards life was being altered. The thought which knocked loudest against its fellows was, "Only in these moments have I begun to live!"

And here is Hilda in *Hilda Lessways*:

> She thought how wonderful it was that she, the shaking little girl who yesterday had run off with fourpence to buy a meal at a tripe-shop, should be the cause of this emotion in such a man. She thought: "My life is marvellous". She was dizzied by the conception of the capacity of her own body and soul for experience.

It is an emotion which, with luck, is not left behind with youth. Here is the sober middle-aged Mr Prohack, experiencing "artistic" London life for the first time.

> Somehow he could scarcely believe that it was not a hallucination, and that he was really in Putney [where his daughter Sissie is running a dancing-school] and that his own sober house in which Sissie had been reared still existed not many miles off.
>
> For Mr Prohack, not continuously but at intervals, possessed a disturbing faculty that compelled him to see the phenomena of human life as they actually were, and to disregard entirely the mere names of things—which mere names by the magic power of mere names usually suffice to satisfy the curiosity of most people and to allay their misgivings if any. . . . Odd as the spectacle was, Mr Prohack enjoyed it . . . he enjoyed the thought that both girls and men had had the wit to escape from the ordinary world into this fantastic environment created out of four walls, a few Chinese lanterns, some rouge, some stuffs, some spangles, friction between two pieces of metal, and the profoundest instinct of nature. . . . "To think", he reflected, "that this sort of thing is seriously going on all over London at this very instant."

But the power to recapture the sense that one is "living" for the first time has a corollary: that for most of the time one does *not* feel one is "living" and an actor in the shared drama of life. Thus the characters in *The Old Wives' Tale* may develop aches or wrinkles, or tragedy may overtake them, but they do not believe it. This is not age or tragedy, they feel, but some private accident peculiar to themselves. For Bennett, life is a continual adolescence. And of course he is right, in a way, and it is a truth to which another "Edwardian" writer, Proust, gave memorable

THE POPE'S JEWS

SAM WAAGENAAR

21 centuries of struggle against religious persecution at the hands of Caesars, Popes and Nazis.

The story of the Jewish community in Rome which lived through all the tragic dramas of European history from the rise and fall of the Roman Empire to the decline and death of the Fascist dictators.

"... this is a solid and often painfully enthralling piece of popular history."

Philip Toynbee
The Observer

488 pages 32 pages of illustrations

£4.95

Alcove Press

59 St. Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS
Tel: 01-836 4194

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

utterance. Thus I am not saying it to discredit Bennett, but merely to emphasise how much it dominates his work.

THE VALUE ATTACHED by Bennett to this feeling of "living" is *kudos*, prestige, success. Thus in *The Old Wives' Tale*, when Sophia finds her friend, the ageing courtesan Madame Foucault, collapsed in the corridor after a quarrel with her lover, "a shapeless mass of lace, frilled linen, and corset", her first thought is "that she had encountered life on a plane that would correspond to her dreams of romance. And she was impressed with a feeling somewhat akin to that of a middling commoner when confronted with a viscount." Again, when, in the same novel, Daniel Povey murders his wife, Bennett depicts the populace of Bursley as overjoyed at the prestige of the event. For once they have figured in "real life." Bennett, characteristically, depicts a crowd, such as congregates outside Povey's house, as a composite child or adolescent.

Now this prestige or success attached by Bennett to the experience of "real life" is clearly closely bound up with his own life aims. Success was the very keynote of Bennett's life. He was a man who made tests for success. I have read somewhere that for him it was a sign of success in life if there was a fresh pineapple on the sideboard. He achieved success on a huge scale, and, contrary to the teaching of moralists, he enjoyed every moment of it and did not find it hollow. How I think he achieved this, though, was by constantly reminding himself of his adolescence and the fantasies of success that he nourished then. Here, I suggest, is a clue to his interest in "continual adolescence." He was really a very strong character, as well as a very nice one, and was never in the least spoiled by success. People, indeed, thought him ostentatious and vulgar, with his frilled shirts and gold fobs, but this may have been partly envy, and at all events he knew very well what he was doing with his appearance and his celebrity. Unlike Balzac he was chasing no social fantasms. Indeed he was a most unsnobbish man: Reginald Pound tells a nice story of how a "distinguished London physician" was dining with a Prince of the royal blood at the Garrick Club, and, seeing Bennett dining alone, said he would like to present him to the Prince. "Bennett's response to the courtesy was to draw his napkin across his mouth, turn and stare over the back of his chair at the waiting guest, call out with a casual wave of the hand: 'Hullo!' and resume his meal."

BUT IF AS A MAN he was far from a snob, as a writer the force of convention did, in a way, make him one. That is to say, try as he might, and indeed because he tried so hard, he could not after all avoid patronising humble and commonplace life. (It required the genius of a Joyce or a Lawrence to overcome literary convention in this matter.) It is for this reason that I cannot quite accept the valuation commonly placed on *The Old Wives' Tale* and *Clayhanger*. Showing the romance of the Pentonville omnibus was all too much an act of will with him. He does it on principle and, too often, against the current of his feelings; he exclaims too loudly, in his particular tone of ecstatic facetiousness. The motive is generous, but the effect is somehow contemptuous. There is something contemptuous, to my ear, in his tone towards Sophia, in the passage I have quoted, and again in this:

> What had happened? Nothing! The most commonplace occurrence! The eternal cause had picked up a commercial traveller (it might have been a clerk or curate, but it in fact was a commercial traveller), and endowed him with all the glorious, unique, incredible attributes of a god, and planted him down before Sophia in order to produce the eternal effect. A miracle performed specially for Sophia's benefit! No one else in Wedgwood Street saw the god walking along by her side. No one else saw anything but a simple commercial traveller. Yes, the most commonplace occurrence!

Bennett, in so loudly proclaiming the glory of the commonplace, is actually travestying it, or at least firmly asserting his own aloofness from it. He writes as though there were something comic in a provincial girl going through universal human experiences and that he were charitably overlooking the fact. In the case of Sophia, who has charm and youth on her side, his tone can pass for geniality; but with other less favoured characters it is definitely jarring. There is no doubt that he considers Maria Insull, the ugly, efficient chief assistant in the Baines shop, in the same novel, a barely-human scarecrow of a woman, and her lover, the ill-tempered old chemist Charles Critchlow, as not much better. Yet he can write of them thus:

> . . . for Charles Critchlow she happened to be an illusion. He had cast eyes on her and had seen youth, innocence, virginity. During eight years the moth Charles had flitted round the lamp of her brilliance, and was now singed past escape.

The facetiousness is offensive, one feels: an offence against the "life" he claims to celebrate.

The Old Wives' Tale is a more comfortable novel than *Une Vie* or *L'Education sentimentale*, partly because of its affectionate "period" interest in bygone clothes and manners, but it is also a more depressing one. For the message of its fine concluding section, memorably entitled "What Life Is", is that the one sure thing about life is that people grow old, and then they die. E. M. Forster was right to say that Time is the

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

true hero of the novel. Some of Bennett's most excellent writing (as Margaret Drabble notes) depicts the mere fact of time passing.

> In June and July it would happen to them [Constance and her husband] occasionally to retire before the last silver of dusk was out of the sky. They would lie in bed and talk placidly of their daily affairs. There would be a noise in the street below. "Vaults closing!" Samuel would say, and yawn. "Yes, it's quite late," Constance would say. And the Swiss clock would rapidly strike eleven on its coil of resonant wire.

The pathos of mere diurnality, of the clock and the calendar, was never more lovingly caught than by Bennett. And he exploits to the limit those devices of Victorian fiction by which events are distanced for the reader, and begin to have the remoteness and appeal of his own irretrievable past. There is a passage in *Une Vie* in which the heroine old and half-crazy, finds a bundle of calendars belonging to her youth, and, pinning them to the wall, spends whole days asking herself "Now, what was I doing then? and then?" In a way, it sometimes seems, Bennett has no more to say than poor Jeanne.

IT IS, AT LEAST, a desolate message that *The Old Wives' Tale* brings. Constance and Sophia have never truly lived, though life has passed for them. Their life has been a dream. They have had, as do all humans according to Bennett, their brief moments of telling themselves "My life is marvellous!" or "I am beginning to live." This is the best that Bennett can point to in life; and it is mere biology, a matter of belonging to the human species. They have never lived as *individuals* or felt, "I am myself, and what I feel now can never be cancelled." Poor Sophia, beside the body of her dead husband, is overwhelmed by the sense that "The manner of his life was of no importance."

> What affected her was that he had once been young, and that he had grown old, and was now dead. That was all. Youth and vigour had come to that. Youth and vigour always came to that. Everything came to that. He had ill-treated her; he had abandoned her; he had been a devious rascal; but how trivial were such accusations against him! The whole of her huge and bitter grievance against him fell to pieces and crumbled. She saw him young, and proud, and strong, as for instance when he had kissed her lying on the bed in that London hotel—she forgot the name—in 1866; and now he was old, and worn, and horrible, and dead. It was the riddle of life that was puzzling and killing her.

It is not so far from how Bennett himself pictured life. Such is the black pessimism that underlies his "romance of the quotidian."

Two Marxists

Fischer & Benjamin—By LAURENCE LERNER

WHEN WE THINK about Marxist theories of literature, the name which springs to mind first is invariably Lukács: he is the most influential and the most learned of all Marxist critics, and his shadow has lain heavy on the aesthetic orthodoxies of Marxism. At the end of his autobiography[1] Ernst Fischer steps out of this shadow: "I revere him as a teacher, love him as a man, and quarrel with many of his aesthetic opinions." The quarrel had not yet begun in 1945, when the book ends: it came later

> "with my increasing distrust of all classical, doctrinaire aesthetics, with my gradual realisation that an earlier period of art had grown outmoded, was come to an end, and that a new one was in process of taking over."

This was an important realisation for Fischer and for scores like him: for the Lukács orthodoxy is that modernism is decadent, the art of the reactionary bourgeoisie; that its irrationalism is a refusal to see man as a social being, or to admit his power over his own destiny, and that timelessness and fatalism are the essentially negative postulates of the refusal of the great 19th-century realistic tradition. I happen to think this view is largely correct, and that most of the new artistic forms of our century do not spring from a new and forward-looking vision of man in society; but it is a view that has embodied in extreme doctrinaire form all that is most distasteful in Marxism. We glimpse something of this in Fischer's encounter with Johannes R. Becher, who moved from youthful expression to impeccable Stalinist orthodoxy and became a cultural leader of all DDR: he was furious when Fischer praised his anti-Nazism at the time of the Hitler-Stalin pact.

Ernst Fischer and Walter Benjamin show us another side of Marxism: less learned but also less dogmatic, less coherent but more freely imaginative. In Fischer's autobiography a suggestive,

[1] *An Opposing Man.* By ERNST FISCHER. Allen Lane, £6.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

creative strain embroiders on the narrative, in the vivid childhood chapter for instance, or in his terrifying Kafkaesque dream of the secret police ("the air is curdled milk, oozing thickly into our mouths, tasting of carrion"). In what is perhaps the most interesting chapter politically, his very frank discussion of his servile Stalinism during the Moscow trials, the really powerful paragraph is saved to the end: after self-reproaches and the explanations he bursts into an intense account of the one crucial factor he realises he has omitted, the intensity of his hatred of Hitler—and a more or less sober discussion crackles into imaginative life (when Hitler "held a baby in his arms, it was as though he were inhaling the smell of human flesh").

Fischer's literary criticism is humane and concerned. In *Kunst und Ideologie* he insists on taking art seriously, fending off both the irresponsible aestheticism of the West and the doctrinaire didacticism of the East: he writes as a revisionist and an enthusiast for the Thaw, and he makes a declaration of faith in the power of art to change the world, even though it is helpless to feed the hungry or avoid a war. It is worthy but tame: these things must be said, and said repeatedly, but Fischer does not often say what none of us could have thought of. Every now and then his Marxism appears, and we are told that Renaissance art shows the undermining of feudal authority by commercial capital: then it disappears, and he grows duller without being more convincing. *The Necessity of Art* (1963) is a livelier book, if only because its Marxism is bolder; and for that reason some of its claims are clearly less tenable. Look for instance at its theory of Romanticism, which it sees as "a movement of protest . . . against the bourgeois capitalist world." The Romantics' glorification of the isolated individual is seen as a rejection of the social order but at the same time as characteristically bourgeois, and this according to Fischer leads to the tensions and contradictions we are all familiar with. Now of course the Romantics made plenty of caustic comments against the money-making spirit, as they also did against Deism, against monarchy, against utilitarianism and against one another. How do you decide which aspect is fundamental? Why do you call it a petty-bourgeois movement (as Fischer does) rather than irrationalist, or a diminishing of ego-control, or a new form of language? Not, certainly, because you have done any research into the social background of the poets (let alone their readers): Raymond Williams's attempt to do this, on a modest scale, in *The Long Revolution*, produced fascinating but inconclusive results. Fischer *starts* by looking for the social dimension of Romanticism, so of course he has no trouble in showing, very suggestively, that Romanticism must be seen socially.

BENJAMIN WAS EVEN less of a systematic thinker than Fischer, and had a sprightlier fancy. He is often bewildering but never predictable, sometimes incomprehensible, sometimes silly, sometimes brilliant, and never worthy. In his hands dialectical materialism is a series of conceits, yoking together basis and superstructure in a way no one else would have thought of. Writing of the work of art in the age of mechanical reproduction, he tells us that the camera has emptied parliaments in the same way as theatres, so that the crisis of bourgeois democracy includes the insidious triumph of the film; or he describes fascism as the application of art-for-art's sake to political life, because it organises the masses without affecting the property structure that they strive to eliminate, and so aestheticises politics.[2] It is a brilliant analogy but it is hard to see that it explains anything. Indeed, it is not even clear in which direction the causation works for Benjamin: he uses theories to weave patterns rather than to offer systematic interpretations. Where Lukács is systematic and rational, Benjamin is suggestive; and it's not at all certain that he is more often wrong.

I want to do Benjamin justice, and discuss one of his studies at length: and the recent issue of his Baudelaire essays in English provides a good example.[3] Their argument rests on the view of Baudelaire as *flâneur*, the stroller through the crowded streets of the modern capital. Benjamin quotes Simmel's remark about the effect of public conveyances on the urban sensibility: "Before the development of buses, railroads and trains in the nineteenth century, people had never been in a position of having to look at one another for long minutes or even hours without speaking to one another." The *flâneur* reacts ambivalently to the uneasiness of the situation. On the one hand he immerses himself in the crowd, as a way of escaping from himself, as Baudelaire marvellously describes in his exhilarating prose-poem, "un Bain de Foule"; on the other hand, he is detached, isolated, sundering himself from the crowd in his search for heroism. Benjamin sums up the ambivalence succinctly: "Baudelaire loved solitude, but he wanted it in a crowd." From this parallel comes a wealth of insights into Baudelaire's poetry. The sonnet "*A une passante*", for instance ("*Longue, mince, en grand deuil, douleur*

[2] *Illuminations*, By WALTER BENJAMIN. Fontana, £1.25.

[3] *Charles Baudelaire, a Lyric Poet in the Era of High Capitalism*. By WALTER BENJAMIN. New Left Books, £3.25.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

contributors to

books and bookmen

have included

SIR HAROLD ACTON
TARIQ ALI
KINGSLEY AMIS
LORD AMULREE
W. H. AUDEN
J. A. BALLARD
LORD BALOGH
CLIVE BARNES
H. E. BATES
LORD BATH
JOHN BAYLEY
KONSTANTIN BAZAROV
SIR CECIL BEATON
CYRIL BEAUMONT
ROBERT BEDDARD
SIR JOHN BETJEMAN
OSWELL BLAKESTON
EDWARD BLISHEN
JOHN BOLAND
VICTOR BONHAM-CARTER
EDWARD DE BONO
LORD BOOTHBY
SIR ADRIAN BOULT
E. R. BRAITHWAITE
ASA BRIGGS
PETER BRINSON
VINCENT BROME
IVOR BROWN
JOHN BRYSON
RICHARD BUCKLE
MOURA BUDBERG
ALAN BURNS
MAURICE BURTON
LORD BUTLER
JOHN CALDER
JAMES CAMERON
MAURICE CAPITANCHIK
EDWARD CARPENTER
LORD DAVID CECIL
LORD CHALFONT
GEORGE CLARK
DAME MARGARET COLE
DERYCK COOKE
DOUGLAS COOPER
BRIAN COX
RONALD CRICHTON
RICHARD CROSSMAN
TOM DRIBERG
LORD EGREMONT
MAURICE EDELMAN
MARTIN ESSLIN
H. J. EYSENCK
DUNCAN FALLOWELL
ERIC FENBY
GONVILLE FFRENCH-BEYTAGH
PAUL FOOT
NOBLE FRANKLAND
MIRON GRINDEA
JONATHAN GUINNESS
JACQUETTA HAWKES
RAYNER HEPPENSTALL
CHRISTOPHER HIBBERT
H. V. HODSON
DAVID HOLBROOK
RICHARD HOLMES
MICHAEL HOLROYD
STUART HOOD
TOM HOPKINSON
MICHAEL HOWARD
HAROLD HOBSON
ALLEN HUTT
H. MONTGOMERY HYDE
RICHARD INGRAMS
PETER JENKINS
PAUL JOHNSON
PHILIPPE JULLIAN
HANS KELLER
ARNOLD KETTLE
CECIL KING
LORD KINROSS
GAVIN LAMBERT
OSBERT LANCASTER
MARGHANITA LASKI
JAMES LAVER
JOHN LEHMANN
ANTHONY LEJEUNE
JOHN LENIHAN
HUGH LEONARD
SIR DAVID LLEWELLYN
ELIZABETH LONGFORD
LORD LONGFORD
SIR ROBERT LUSTY
E. L. MASCALL
ROBERT McKENZIE
YEHUDI MENUHIN
SIR IAIN MONCREIFFE
LORD MONTAGU
DIANA MOSLEY
SIR OSWALD MOSLEY
MALCOLM MUGGERIDGE
A. S. NEILL
NIGEL NICOLSON
ROBERT NYE
DILLIBE ONYEAMA
ATES ORGA
CHARLES OSBORNE
C. NORTHCOTE PARKINSON
ERIC PARTRIDGE
MICHAEL PITT-RIVERS
HENRY PLEASANTS
TOM POCOCK
ROGER POOLE
JAMES POPE-HENNESSY
ENOCH POWELL
J. B. PRIESTLEY
ALAN PRYCE-JONES
PETER QUENNELL
ROBERT RAY
LORD ROBENS
CECIL ROBERTS
C. H. ROLPH
SIR JOHN ROTHENSTEIN
A. L. ROWSE
KEN RUSSELL
JOHN SALTMARSH
CHRIS SEARLE
MARTIN SEYMOUR-SMITH
FRANCIS SHEPPARD
SIR SACHEVERELL SITWELL
SIR JOHN SMYTH
LORD SOPER
STEPHEN SPENDER
DEREK STANFORD
MERVYN STOCKWOOD
JACK TREVOR STOREY
SIR JOHN SUMMERSON
FRANK SWINNERTON
CHRISTOPHER SYKES
MICHAEL TANNER
JOHN TASKER
JOHN RUSSELL TAYLOR
STEPHEN WALSH
AUBERON WAUGH
JOHN WEIGHTMAN
J. S. WEINER
DAVID WEISS
ANTHONY WEST
MARY WHITEHOUSE
ANGUS WILSON
COLIN WILSON
PETER WILSON

books and bookmen will send a free sample copy on request. 75 Victoria Street, London SW1
or 40p from newsagents monthly or by post £2 trial 6 months subscription to any address

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

majestueuse, Une femme passa"), is seen as expressing the kind of sexual shock that can beset a lonely man, a love which only the city dweller experiences, "not so much love at first sight as love at last sight." This is neat, and draws out the social dimension of the poem's meaning—though it may not have the evaluative implications that Benjamin seems to want to draw from it. The poem, after all, is (surely) melodramatic to the point of crudity, and grows no less so as a result of this comment.

THE OPPOSITE to Baudelaire's attitude to the crowd, according to Benjamin, is found in Hugo, for whom the crowd is a spectacle of nature ("the surging ocean is its model"), who sees the world as teeming with multitudinous life, and who is "the first great writer whose works have collective titles: *Les Miserables*, etc." This is related to Hugo's political creed, "the creed of the *citoyen*": and we have a satisfying parallelism between the politics and the poetic attitudes of two contrasting writers, a reactionary and a progressive. But once we try to generalise this into a theory we are in trouble. If we look in English, for instance, for a parallel to Hugo's vision of the "*foule sans nom*", which he compares to "*un bois d'Amerique ou une ruche d'abeilles*", we can find it in Wordsworth's vision of the London crowd in Book 7 of *The Prelude*, which contains no trace of the creed of the *citoyen*, a creed Wordsworth had lost all faith in by the time he wrote the poem.

NOW FISCHER as it happens has written of Baudelaire too, and partly in the form of a criticism of Benjamin. For Fischer, in *The Necessity of Art*,[4] the greatness of Baudelaire lies in the tension between the clear, even austere classical construction, and the "riot of subjectivity, the tumult of antitheses" within a poem like *Le Voyage*; and he conveys this tension, between death wish and inventive joy, between melodiousness and passion, more eloquently than Benjamin ever does. His disagreement with Benjamin concerns Baudelaire's relationship to the literary market. Whereas, for Benjamin, Baudelaire is the type of someone exploiting a market ("his poems were full of special devices intended to put all other poets into the shade"), for Fischer he sets up his effigy of beauty as a rejection of the bourgeois world, defying the very idea of pleasing a public. How can this disagreement be settled? Fischer himself realises that it can't, for Baudelaire's attitude was essentially ambivalent: "he produced for a non-existent, anonymous market . . . but . . . in the expectation of some eventual, unknown public or consumer." But isn't this true of any poet? The inventive joy of Baudelaire's poetry, its positives of energy and the wish to communicate do, of course, imply a belief in a potential audience; but to say this may be to say something too obvious to be useful, and may tell us nothing about Baudelaire. The objection is partly true, and is exactly the kind of objection to which Marxism is vulnerable: it offers universal points as if they were particular ones. And yet Fischer's point is not wholly invalid; for as we read on we see that he has in mind a contrast with Mallarmé, for whom "*l'art pour l'art* leads into a vacuum." Here is something useful after all: a paraphrase in social terms of a difference between two poets of which all readers are aware.

Benjamin draws directly on Marx when he uses the theory of commodities in order to interpret Baudelaire's empathy with inorganic things. In a splendid sentence he remarks of "Spleen II" ("*Je suis un vieux boudoir, plein de roses fanées*") "the image of the Sphinx which concludes the poem has the gloomy beauty of unsaleable articles such as may still be found in arcades." One can imagine that comparison occurring in the poem itself: the sensibility of the critic is not here analysing the poetry but mingling with it, to form an alloy. For Benjamin is at his best when searching for analogies and parallels. Sometimes they do not hold, as I think on reflection this one doesn't, for to Marx commodities are fetishised when performing their normal economic function, whereas Baudelaire is haunted by objects that can be seen as somehow oblique to normal life: hence the importance of the prostitute, of gambling, of states of extreme consciousness. Benjamin quotes Engels' account of the unfeeling isolation of the London crowd "each in his private interest", and it is not quite clear to me if he admits how different this is from Baudelaire's vision. He writes that Baudelaire remains conscious of the horrible social reality "in the way in which intoxicated people are 'still' aware of reality"—a brilliant description of Baudelaire's concern with unstable consciousness, but it does not (as it surely should) lead him to a contrast with Engels' utterly sober interpretation. I suspect the reason is that Benjamin is not keen to stress the profound difference between Marxism and a poet he so much admires. He is a critic of fertile uneven insights who seems to want to make a more central use of Marxist theory than his restless vitality allowed.

SO THE CONCLUSION I draw from both these critics is the same. A critic is exciting in so far as he thinks in analogies; he is able to offer explanations and theories in so far as he argues

[4] Penguin Books (1970)

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

vigorously and advances his points as hypotheses, not as metaphors. Benjamin most of the time and Fischer at his best belong to the first kind, and they both use Marxism. Both, that is, believed that social relationships and technological processes are fundamental, and determine the artistic and intellectual superstructure: for the Marxist, the fetishism of commodities is not an analogy to Baudelaire's poetry but a cause of it. But since it must be the cause of other, very different poetry, the theory in this systematic form is not of much use to the literary critic. The more systematic your theory, the less it may illuminate actual works of art, and Benjamin's weakness as a coherent theorist, though it makes him tantalising to read, is probably the necessary price of his talent. This should worry the true Marxist—though it usually doesn't, since both Benjamin and Fischer declared their allegiance to the doctrines they never bothered to test, only used. It needn't worry the non-Marxist: if the theories are false anyway, you might as well forget about their truth and pillage them for metaphors.

The Warrior Bard

Douglas After Thirty Years—By ROY FULLER

THE AUTHOR IS an English don in his mid-thirties. An indication of the term of hard labour he has served in researching and writing this work[1] may be gathered from a time-lapse of "thirty years" in the narrative becoming "thirty-five years" in the "Acknowledgments." The published sources for a biography of Keith Douglas are virtually merely his *Collected Poems* and his prose battle narrative, *Alamein to Zem Zem*. The editors of the second edition (1966) of the latter did say in their preface that they had considered "a number of short pieces and letters" —presumably for publication with *Alamein to Zem Zem*—but "it was felt . . . that these were of rather limited interest and that Douglas himself would not have wished them to be revived at this time." Mr Graham has accordingly had to go to Douglas's MSS and the various holders of the letters and, most arduous and time-consuming of all, has painstakingly tapped the memories of Douglas's surviving friends.

The result is an almost unqualified success. However much we may admire his work, it does not follow that we shall be interested in the life of a poet who died at the age of twenty-four. But Mr Graham has used his material (Douglas's own part of which is far better than his editors led us to believe) with great tact and skill. Though many of the recovered memories must have been trivial, what appears here is always germane to the poetry or the pattern of the life. The patchwork is smoothly joined and the narrative finely paced and proportioned. Mr Graham likes and respects his subject and I think in the end succeeds in transferring some such feeling to his readers.

For if there is anything capable of putting us off Douglas's poetry it is his character. We must make allowances, obviously, for the inescapable fact that the biography of one so young is bound to contain an undue proportion of adolescent surliness and immature love-affairs. But quite apart from such inherently tedious elements, the full picture of Douglas emphasises some of the unpleasant traits of which disconcerting hints were to be found in *Alamein to Zem Zem*. His background was a traditional womb of reaction—the father an officer of the First World War turned chicken-farmer; the mother of good family but without money. His father and mother separated when Douglas was eight and thereafter Mrs Douglas lived in genteel poverty. (One must add, however, that Douglas's relations with her were remarkably easy and frank; and that she has always dealt with his work in what seems exemplary fashion. There is a piece to be written on the formidable mothers of dead war poets: *cf.* Mrs Owen and Mrs Brooke.) Douglas got to Christ's Hospital and Oxford on scholarships but was quite the reverse of an assiduous swot. He was a truculent youth (and a truculent man); keen on riding, the OTC, tap-dancing; and a clumsy but tough second-row forward. He had "the face of a parrot and a Jewish-looking parrot at that," he said of himself at school, but was vain of his appearance and left off his spectacles even at the cost of considerable inconvenience. He was a snob, with none of the 'thirties intellectual's sympathy for or sentimentality about the proletariat. He was a resourceful trouble-maker, with a cruel tongue and (to give him his due) a

[1] *Keith Douglas, 1920-1944: A Biography.* By DESMOND GRAHAM. Oxford University Press, £5.50.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

lack of fear about consequences. He pursued many girls but they seemed not to like him greatly or, at any rate, fairly rapidly tired of him.

Yet such things (and a good few more of similar kind), allied with his brain-power and command of language, operated to bring him to early maturity and so to leave behind a remarkable body of work. He hadn't, as so many young writers have, to work through inherited illusions of belief and style before finding his own. As is well-known, he got a poem into the close-meshed net of *New Verse* when he was still at school. Mr Graham gives us some particulars of this and they are illuminating. A school-friend came upon him one day "in the House day room, tap-dancing alongside the billiard table, a copy of *New Verse* beside him. 'Anyone can write like the stuff in here,' said Douglas. 'Go on then, try: and I bet you can't!' " said the friend. This was 1936, when Douglas was sixteen, and Mr Graham gives extracts from the poems submitted in response to the friend's challenge. They are plainly (to our eyes now) *ersatz* mid-'thirties poems (Tessimond, Day Lewis, Bernard Spencer immediately spring to mind as one reads them) and Grigson was not apt to be deceived—and rejected them. The poem that actually achieved publication (in 1938, above the name "K. C. Douglas") was made of less disparate stuff, though it still contains a good few period properties.

There are, among the schooldays poems, two or three extraordinary and idiosyncratic successes —"Encounter with a God" is an obvious instance. But the persisting influence (and it is there, though mastered by Douglas's own voice, until the end) is the short-lined, non-Latinate Auden of *Poems* (which he chose as one of the books for his "Open Scholar's prize" just before leaving school, though he had read Auden at fifteen). What an advantage! Most Auden-influenced poets of the time, older than Douglas, were, I should say, devotees of the *Look, Stranger!* (and later) styles. Douglas's lack of political axes to grind (or lack, certainly, of left-wing political axes); his uninterest in bringing specific references —historical or whatever—into his poetry; his not wanting to *change the world* through poetry—all combined to keep the Auden influence that of ur-Auden. Poets slightly younger than Douglas would tend to transform some of these characteristics into a positive reaction *against* Auden.

Here is the beginning of one of the fifteen-year-old's poems, "Distraction From Classics":

Now my mind's off again. No tears
Of Catullus move me. Though I know, in turn
We too will praise these years
Of watching clouds through windows, fluttering pages. . . .

I SAID, WHEN REVIEWING the 1966 edition of the *Collected Poems* (in *the Review*, No. 17), that when Douglas got to Oxford in the Michaelmas term of 1938 a generation of poets had established itself of vastly different aims from those of Auden and his followers, and that Douglas was infected to a degree by the romanticism prevailing. One would want to qualify such a broad judgment in the light of the details Mr Graham provides. Through his tutor, Edmund Blunden, Douglas met and became friends with Margaret Stanley-Wrench, winner of the Newdigate and then in her fourth year; however, she would hardly claim to have been a fashionable Oxford poet of the time. John Waller and J. C. Hall were then the significant poetic *entrepreneurs*, but Douglas did not see much of them. Of course, personal contact is far from being a condition of literary influence and there was clearly something in the very air that crept through Douglas's defences. The "Oxford Miscellany", *Augury*, which he helped to edit, contains contributions which stem from a pre-Auden (or even pre-Eliot) state of English poetry and the editors positively rejoiced that the "poets in this anthology are not with the times, but in most of their thoughts they hark back or forward to a better age." One or two of Douglas's poems of this period have archaic touches—epithets like "sweet" and "merry", titles like "Haydn—Clock Symphony"—but this apparatus is essentially superficial and I wouldn't now want to argue for very much backsliding by Douglas at this point. My chief evidence for the charge I made in *the Review*, a poem called "Villanelle of Sunlight", may not, Mr Graham argues, be by Douglas at all! (I will say something later about the fairly miserable published text of the poetry.) Of the Oxford poets who are more positively associated with the break from the Auden-dominated 'thirties, John Heath-Stubbs and David Wright did not come up until October 1939 and Sidney Keyes until a year later still: Douglas seems to have known none of them and, indeed, left the University at the end of June 1940 to await call-up into (characteristically!) the Third Horsed Cavalry Training Regiment.

What marks Douglas off ideologically from practically all the poetically-respectable poets of the Second World War is the large absence in his work of what may be called the civilian element. The reluctant draftee, the actual or potential *paterfamilias*, the essential pacifist with views at some point along the red end of the spectrum—such attitudes are not to be found in Douglas, though even poets younger than he was (Drummond Allison, for instance) to some degree embody in their war poetry the attitudes of those whose views and moods were haunted by child-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hood memories of the First War, and fixed by the doom-pointing events of the Thirties. Moreover, all Douglas's military service was as an officer or cadet. The proletarianisation brought about by service in the ranks did not happen to him. Nor was he bored by things military; and if he was bored by red-tape or career-frustration he often behaved in an egocentric way that would have got a man in the ranks sent to the glasshouse. The most famous incident of his war service was going under his own steam from a behind-the-lines job to join his regiment in the Western Desert.

No doubt this may be seen as some kind of Nietzschean running with the long-term forces of the age, however frightful. On one level Douglas may be labelled an incipient fascist (the logical fulfilment of his origins!) or certainly as an Army "pig" (if the Army used the term, as the Navy did). On 6 September 1939, he had told an Oxford friend that he would "bloody well make my mark in this war" and would "not come back." Mr Alvarez has said that the boredom and frustration of the war mattered less to Douglas "than the chance to use the destructive element to find and express" his own identity (*Observer*, 13 November 1966). I don't think any such semi-mystical or obscurely analytical terms are necessary. Douglas's tastes and talents were suited to the war (see the careers of some of the characters in Anthony Powell's *The Music of Time*). His death in Normandy, though anticipated by him, had no element of the self-willed, like Alun Lewis's in Burma. His courage, interest in clothes (including uniforms and his military turn-out), notion of himself as a horseman (his early army training seems to have differed little from that he might have received in the First War) and conviction of upper-class superiority drove him along. We must feel it significant, for example, that quite soon after arriving in Egypt, using his truck illegally to drive to Cairo to collect a friend's pay, he accidentally ran down and killed an Arab. As he put it in a letter: "I hit him with one mudguard and broke his left foot more or less clean off under one wheel. He had burst some small artery in his stomach and vomited blood all over everyone. . . ." Whether this was really taken thus easily in his stride, who knows?

BUT THE "QUARREL WITH HIMSELF", out of which his poetry came, was that emotionally he realised the preposterousness of war and intellectually the historical absurdity of the officer-class. For all his prose acceptance of the war and rather morbid interest in wounds and corpses, when his verse rises to its heights it differs little in essence from the humane poetry of his service contemporaries

NEW FROM METHUEN

Ecstasy and Holiness

Counter-culture and the open society

FRANK MUSGROVE

An enormously readable study of the values and activities of the counter-culture in England which relates the contemporary movement to those that accompanied major episodes of economic transformation in the past. He sees the counter-culture as the outcome of opportunity, not 'alienation', of openness, not bureaucracy or technology. £3.95; University Paperback £1.90

Education and Personal Relationships

R. S. DOWNIE, EILEEN M. LOUDFOOT and ELIZABETH TELFER

A philosophical introduction to what it is to be a teacher and to be educated, the sorts of justification that can be offered for the pursuit of education, and the nature of personal relationships in educational situations. £2.60; University Paperback £1.30

The Pan-African Movement

IMANUEL GEISS

Translated by ANN E. KEEP

Imanuel Geiss' comprehensive and detailed analysis of the history of the Pan-African Movement is now available in English for the first time. The book traces the evolution of the movement from the fight against the slave trade to its role in the political development of modern Africa. The author examines the diverse elements that contributed to the movement, the intellectual and political climates in Britain, America and Africa, and the personalities of its leaders, drawing extensively on both published and unpublished sources. £9.50; University Paperback £4.75

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Sociology and the Demystification of the Modern World

John Rex's controversial new book concerns not only professional sociologists but all thinking people in the modern world. He writes from a deep conviction that sociology is a subject whose insights should be made available to the great mass of the people, so they may liberate themselves from the media.

In **Fact in Fiction** Joan Rockwell argues that however fantastic the content of fiction may be, it is neither more nor less than a representation of social fact; for literature does not 'reflect' or 'arise from' society, but is a functioning part of it. She relates fiction itself and its forms and functions to various types of society, and discusses three key social, historical and literary studies: Negro slavery in the United States, matriarchy in Athens in the fifth century BC, and shifting values of spies in British fiction.

English Interludes is Cecily Mackworth's vivid account of four outstanding French poets—Mallarmé, Verlaine, Paul Valéry, and Valéry Larbaud—who came to England during the mid- and late-Victorian period. She shows how they lived and what they did in England and directs fascinating new light on the effect of these visits on their life and work. The study includes interesting material on literary London before the First World War.

Sociology and the Demystification of the Modern World
JOHN REX
International Library of Sociology £4.50

Fact in Fiction
The Use of Literature in the Systematic Study of Society
JOAN ROCKWELL £3.95

English Interludes
CECILY MACKWORTH £4.95

ROUTLEDGE
68 Carter Lane, London EC4V 5EL

and ancestors—seeing, for example, with ironic pity the soldiers in the Middle East as

> *the kindly visitors who meant*
> *so well all winter but at last fell*
> *unaccountably to killing in the spring.*

Of course, like all poets in the Second World War he felt sharply that everything had been said before. Nevertheless, I'm sure he was right in his conviction that, as Mr Graham encapsulates it, "war poetry could only be written by those with substantial experience of war." The poetry of the barrack stanchions and the office wallahs has its value but one can't help thinking that despite his talent, Douglas wouldn't without the battle experience in the desert, just have made himself the outstanding poet of the war. Poetic truth (as well as historical logic) required him to see—even create—in addition to imagining, those corpses.

> *Now in my dial of glass appears*
> *the soldier who is going to die.*
> *He smiles, and moves about in ways*
> *his mother knows, habits of his.*
> *The wires touch his face: I cry*
> *NOW. . . .*

"I THINK YOU HAVE definitely an ear," T. S. Eliot wrote to him in February 1941 after receiving the MSS of some poems, *via* Blunden. That is an obvious tribute, though the prosodic means of the mature poetry are remarkably simple. Douglas in general avoids the pentameter and this helps him to escape clottedness and rhetoric ("I see no reason to be musical or sonorous," he wrote in a letter of August 1943 to J. C. Hall, which contains a succinct account of his last aims and methods). Though I haven't done the count, I suppose most of his lines are tetrameter (though well spiced with trimeters), arguably the length of line most natural to be spoken. It's been said by several verse technicians that the unrhymed iambic tetrameter won't do in English, and though Douglas is quite prepared to write *vers libre* he usually sees the great virtue—almost the necessity with his line—of rhyme (however approximate—and his rhyming is often approximate, though not at all like Auden's skill in *Poems*) where the enjambment is so frequent and the beat so irregular. His characteristic mode is a six-line stanza, rhyming (or having assonances) abccba, and this provides discipline and memorability without destroying the speakableness of the verse. The "ear" also evidences itself in a perhaps not entirely instinctive omission of weak beats, the putting side by side of strong beats—requiring conversation-like pauses. The poetic effects gained by such devices are to be much admired: the texture is sparse but strong,

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the underlying technique unobtrusive. The poet is working hard at the technical tasks he has set himself (Mr Graham refers more than once to a great number of drafts) but not so as to lose sight of the "reportage and extro-spective" element that Douglas thought essential in the poetry of war.

ONE'S ALWAYS been suspicious of the printed text of Douglas's poems. Mr Graham confirms the suspicions afresh—see, for instance, his notes on "Snakeskin and Stone" which, for a start, should have been printed in those six-line stanzas. He is the man to be entrusted with a new edition (though whether a new one is "on" so soon after the last is another matter). With his analyses of the poetry one's less happy. They are sometimes unclear and anti-poetic in the American academic *genre*. He's inclined not to accept that poets are often content that their poetry shall be ambivalent, and he will accept a confused or not-quite-thought-through poem for gospel—for example, "Landscape with Figures." There he takes the observational felicities for granted, concentrating on the metaphysics, as it were, but Douglas must have been quite chuffed (as we ordinary readers are) with "scattered wingcases and/legs, heads" for the debris of battle; and

> *On scrub and sand the dead men wriggle*
> *in their dowdy clothes.*

But Mr Graham is consistently sensible about Douglas's *ipsissima verba* (some of his more laborious commentary may come from his unpublished thesis, an earlier work, on Douglas's writings). So, too, though he is sometimes off-target or too respectful in relation to (mainly literary) phenomena of Douglas's time, he has provided most of the materials for a proper judgment about Douglas. It's an indication of the good job he has done that at the end of my notice I feel I've examined only the fringes of the subject. A final word: the production of this book leaves little to be desired. The fascinating photographs, reproduction of MSS and Douglas's own skilful and often attractive drawings come in the text, and I'm sure this was the right way to do the job.

Where We Should All Be

Letters of Edwin Muir—By JANET ADAM SMITH

> *"Art is for me the only way of growing, of becoming myself more purely; and I value it for myself, I know it is my* good, *the only real good for me, and the personal feeling, the personal integration seems to me more and more the thing that really matters. Given that, other things will become right, for one will be alive and have therefore some criticism of life."*

ONE OF THE PLEASURES of reading these letters[1] is to observe how steadfastly Edwin Muir held to this faith through a life whose outward circumstances were so often so unpropitious to art.

The earliest letter, tender and understanding, is to a girl Muir had been fond of in his Glasgow days; it is dated March 1919, when he was 32. Behind lay the uprooting from Orkney, the death of his parents and two brothers in Glasgow, the awful years working in the bone-factory in Greenock. Soon after came his marriage to Willa Anderson, whose devotion and energy freed him from the drudgery of his clerking and launched him on his life as a writer. Letters from their early wandering years describe their life in Prague, Dresden, Vienna, the Mediterranean, at a time when good wine could be had for 3d a bottle and St Tropez was "a little fishing village . . . a rather primitive, but pretty place." But this book is not an autobiography-through-letters: some stages of Muir's life are hardly represented (no letters from the bad days in Glasgow and Greenock, very few from Prague 1945–48 when he lived through the Communist *coup*), though the editor's chronology and notes make it easy to fill in gaps and grasp allusions. The book is about being, rather than doing; it is the record of a questing mind, and the revelation of a truly good man.

Muir knew he had to be a poet, but he never demanded that the world should therefore treat him more kindly or exempt him from the common lot. To live, he took on the bread-and-butter work of translation and regular novel-reviewing, and redeemed them from drudgery by the spirit in which he did them. His uncomplaining acceptance of such work, and his generosity shine from this letter of March 1933 to his Glasgow brother-in-law George Thorburn:

"At Christmas we were down to £1.10.0, with

[1] *Selected Letters of Edwin Muir*. Edited by P. H. BUTTER. The Hogarth Press, £4.25.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

no job in prospect, the rent due, myself down with the 'flu. In the first week of the year I got a job from Gollancz, also a huge book to translate; and the same week *The Listener*, quite out of the blue, offered me the job of reviewing novels for them. So that out of hopelessness we were raised in a few days to comparative comfort. I've hardly ever felt more thankful in my life. I'm sending £4 for you and Lizzie as a thanks-offering, and hoping that it will be of some little use. We're all right for several months to come at least, and can quite well afford it."

In 1940, when they were living at St Andrews, and thin wartime periodicals had little space for reviews, Muir went back to a clerk's job at the Food Office in Dundee, wryly noting that he could get no teaching work in Scotland because

"I found that my lack of an academic degree is a most astonishing obstacle: in Scotland nothing but a certificate of some kind seems to be recognised as really meritorious."

This particular drudgery could not be redeemed, and after a few months his body rebelled. Illness and enforced rest

"made me realise that I had been rushing on like a madman, past my true self, living my own actual unique life as if it belonged to anyone at all, or to someone whom I had no concern with, someone who did not matter in the least to me. . . . The result of my tranquillity. . . has been a little freshet of poetry."

With such a firm sense of where *his* real life lay, Muir could be endlessly generous to others. He could be a sharp critic, saying of Wyndham Lewis—

"He is unhappy, and he uses his intellect to conceal this from himself; not only to make his unhappiness appear the norm, but to make it almost admirable. There is a devastating absence of joy in his work, something wall-eyed and self-willed. . . ."

But there is no hint of any competitiveness in his attitude to fellow-writers, and he could do justice to talents quite unlike his own: he was one of the first critics to appreciate Ivy Compton-Burnett. Poetry, and the criticism of poetry, could never be for him an area of aggression, as it sometimes seems today; and for poets there was ready sympathy and encouragement, and hopes that *their* springs would flow even though his own might be dry. To Kathleen Raine he wrote:

"We all feel that we shall never write another poem, and feel it sometimes for long stretches: I think it is a common experience, and very painful, and very unpleasant, until the gates open again."

And to Norman MacCaig:

"I keep seeing poems by you everywhere, with friendly envy (if there is such a thing: I hope there is). How lovely to have the spring flowing freely (you are really to be envied) and not monotonously either, but with more variety than ever before."

HE WOULD HAVE LIKED more readers, but was not bothered by reputation. In 1938 he wrote:

"As for my poetry, it has never 'taken on', except for Willa, a few friends, a few poets like Walter de la Mare, and that is naturally discouraging, but would never make me give up the writing of it, when the impulse comes. But encouragement, on the other hand, strengthens the impulse. . . . I've acquired a certain reputation, not a big one, by going on writing poetry; but that is almost worthless, for it is not a matter of understanding, and understanding is the only thing of any use to a man who is saying what he thinks."

Nor was he bothered about trends, fashion, being in the swim. After praising Stephen Spender (in 1935) for the "freedom and naturalness and inventiveness of your use of language", he went on:

"I have naturalness in my own poetry, but I'm afraid I often lack freedom and inventiveness, which are qualities that can't be picked up and put in, and so I shall have to do without them. . . . I think we are all far too much moved by a spirit of emulation, and when something 'new' appears feel almost in conscience bound to produce something new, whereas if we wrote from the solidest basis within ourselves we should produce something that is new."

To the literary world Muir sat lightly, though it gave him his living; his real interest was elsewhere. He was quite unperturbed when a row broke over his head on the publication of his *Scott and Scotland*, with Hugh McDiarmid calling for his blood; and surprised when, late in life, the honours came—degrees from Edinburgh, Prague and Cambridge, the C.B.E., the Charles Eliot Norton lectures at Harvard.

Towards the end of his life, he welcomed the idea of writing a book on the Ballads, because

"it will give me time for something which I shall enjoy doing and take me back again into the roots of poetry, where we should all be, and away from fashion."

As Eliot observed after his death, Muir seemed not much concerned with technique, "but under

THE PROTEAN SELF
Dramatic Action in Contemporary Fiction
Alan Kennedy
In this book contemporary novels and their writers are re-interpreted in a critical examination of the relationship between current literature and the achievements of the modern period. Fiction is considered not only in terms of self-generated forms but as a development of varied dramatic role-playing in relation to society. The introductory chapter presents a summary and critique of the sociological theory involved and there are individual chapters on Joyce Cary, Graham Greene, Christopher Isherwood, John Fowles and a major revaluation of Muriel Spark. There are also commentaries on Yeats, Lawrence, Hemingway, Joyce, Amis, Wain, Taylor, Bellow, Gombrowicz and Iris Murdoch.
£5·95 Macmillan

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the pressure of emotional intensity, and possessed by his vision, he found almost unconsciously the right, the inevitable way of saying what he wanted to say."

The vision to which he was so steadfast is in his wonderful *Autobiography*, and in his poems: in "The Transfiguration" where all creation shares with man the glory of the moment; in "The Horses" where nature comes back to a world struck by a nuclear holocaust; in "The Road" where time has stopped and history has rolled back:

There the beginning finds the end
Before beginning ever can be,
And the great runner never leaves
The starting and the finishing tree,
The budding and the fading tree.

It is a vision both other-worldly and deeply human, of an imaginative order existing beyond the confines of one person's life, yet able to enrich every human life.

> "Seen deeply enough the life of the most ordinary human creature, who has to feel or bear all these final things, seems to me portentous, past all theorising, all relevance to optimism or pessimism. So that for myself the affirmation of life is not conditioned by my having to think life a happy business, and it has very little to do with love, except that love which is an attempt to comprehend, to imagine, everything, terrible as well as pleasant."

Muir—who had left the Kirk in youth and never felt he could join any other church—had in full measure the power that Keats called Negative Capability. Writing to Stephen Spender about "death and the fortuitous snuffing-out of life" he says—

> "I can't accept any religious explanation that I know of, any more than you. I would rather have the problems themselves, for from an awareness of them and their vastness I get some sort of living experience, some sense even of communion, of being in the whole in some way, whereas from the explanations I should only get comfort and reassurance and a sense of safety which I know is not genuine."

IN ONE OF THE LAST LETTERS I had from him, from Harvard, he spoke of a girl who had left a lecture by I. A. Richards "in bewilderment." "That's splendid", Richards had said when Muir passed the comment on, "that's where one should start." And Muir called the poem he then wrote "The Poet", for it was where he started too.

And in bewilderment
My tongue shall tell
What mind had never meant
Nor memory stored.
In such bewilderment
Love's parable
Into the world was sent
To stammer its word . . .

Heaven-sent perplexity—
If thought should thieve

Pepys 8

Volume VIII (£6 net) of the new, complete edition of **The Diary of Samuel Pepys,** edited by Robert Latham and William Matthews, is now in the shops. It covers the longest year of entries in the Diary—1667, the year of Clarendon's fall and the Dutch incursions into the Medway.

Richard Crossman, *New Statesman* (on Vols VI-VII): 'The editors have achieved the impossible . . . one can now read the Diary perfectly easily, month by month, year by year . . . a really learned edition where the learning is put at the disposal of the layman.'

Bernard Levin, *Observer* (on Vols VI-VII): 'Here, in one of the finest feats in all the long history of scholarship, is Pepys's Diary, once and for all. *Exegi monumentum aere perennius.*'

Sir Arthur Bryant (on Vols IV-VII): 'Complete perfection. . . . It really is a great public service to have produced it.'

Vols I-III, *£12.50 net;* **IV-V,** *£8.25 net;* **VI-VII,** *£9 net*

U.S.A. publishers: **University of California Press,** 223 Fulton St., Berkeley, California 94720

6 Portugal St London WC2 (01-405 0805)

BELL

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

One word of the mystery
All would be wrong.
Most faithful fantasy
That can believe
Its immortality
And make a song.

Letters can bring the dead to life. As I read these, I hear Edwin's soft Orkney voice, and count myself lucky to have had as friend a man who, in his gentle and humorous way, was as near a saint as ever I expect to meet.

Secret Countries

Recent Poetry—by DOUGLAS DUNN

READING ANDREW YOUNG'S poems[1] the impression that they are little more than residual excellences from an earlier, pastoral England is complicated by real admiration for the fact that they work and have effect. What literary upheavals there were in his time—and, born in 1885, he was the same age as Pound, three years older than Eliot, and seven years older than "Hugh MacDiarmid"—fall away as beside the point.

Whether it is right for a reader to submit to the luxurious abdication of his historical consciousness in this way is a different matter. The question is central to contemporary poetry in English. With what I hope is not vainglorious honesty, I admit defeat—its answers are personal and creative instead of critical. For what is involved is the alignment of past and present in the imagination, a fundamental creative act about which criticism can never serve reader or poet as information, only as stimulus.

It is just so like the polite English thing that Young's poems, accepted with gladness in almost every camp, should be contrary to the real movements of feeling that have swayed other countries and continents. They are latched on to as proof of a secret English world, an incorruptible country in which an endearing countryside and its appropriate arts are like old soldiers and never die. No matter what happens in dark, satanic cities, or on foreign fields—the accepted phrases quickly remove them from the secret country—the fields, wild-flowers and landscapes are the same, and continue to elicit spiritual and personal dramas from the observer. It is both reassuring and appalling.

And yet hardly as English as all that. His poems are a version of *England Their England*, written by a man who thought it was his as well. Young was a Scotsman. But it is worth noting that when he writes about Scottish scenery, it occasionally releases his distaste for it, or a less placid melancholy. In the Cuillins, he says he is in Hell. I've never been there; but other poems by Scotsmen about these particular mountains led me to think they were in heaven. Young appears to have cultivated an English sensibility by preference, being suited to a miniature art of observation which Scottish temperaments seldom come to with ease.

As a clergyman, Young naturally paid attention to spiritual predicaments and celebrations. Far from being the strongest impulse in his work, Young's religious feeling is more effectively conveyed through his love of nature and his overall benevolence. The voice in his poems is generally one of personal loneliness, inevitably aroused or calmed by Nature. His perception of what Nature is and does was not one to admit of change. The secret country is permanent. Significantly, it is in a poem with a Scottish setting where Young says he fixes his concentration on the cries of seagulls, blotting the sounds of traffic from a nearby road out of his mind. His England seldom, if ever, allows so modern an intrusion. His visitors are ghosts from the past. The poet becomes like a ghost himself.

Young's natural southern England remained as placid and free of modernity as when he first lived in it in the years after the Great War, and he stuck to his love of it. Fidelity can sometimes be just another word for evasion. Yet any reader of poems must constantly be surprised by the loyalty of a temperament to itself, risking the insults that may come from appearing to be wilfully out of date. Even if the vision of his poetry may have a nostalgic appeal for some, to read it in that way is to accept that there was once a purity of nature and society, which Young's poetry somehow embodies, when in fact his vision is as much imaginative as a matter of recall.

LONG AGO, in what now seems his boyhood, Alvarez described Auden's gifts of social observation as the talents of a journalist who caught the

[1] *Complete Poems* By ANDREW YOUNG. Secker & Warburg, £4.50.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the new review

is the first literary monthly to be founded in Britain for more than a decade. In four months of publication it has established itself as the liveliest and most discriminating journal of the arts available anywhere today. Contributions include:

ROBERT LOWELL / TEN NEW POEMS
JEAN RHYS / SLEEP IT OFF LADY
EDNA O'BRIEN / A SCANDALOUS WOMAN
KINGSLEY AMIS / a profile by CLIVE JAMES
PHILIP LARKIN by DAN JACOBSON
ALISON LURIE / WHAT HAPPENED IN HAMLET
ROLAND BARTHES by JOHN STURROCK
JOHN McGAHERN / THE LEAVETAKING
PETER PORTER / GRUB STREET v ACADEME
GEORGE STEINER / THE ENGLISH INTELLECTUAL
NEWS / REVIEWS / SATIRE / CONTROVERSY / PICTURES

Subscriptions £12 or $30 p.a. (half-price to bona fide students).
To Oxford University Press, 116 High Street, Oxford OX1 4BZ

Please send me.....issues of *The New Review* beginning

with.....(month) issue

Name and Address.....
(block letters)
.....

.....

.....

I enclose cheque/postal order for.....

If entering your subscription at the student rate please state place and course of study.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tone of his time through its superficialities rather than its depths. One consequence of this, which Alvarez announced with all the triumph of a new man who had at last found a way of shifting Auden an inch or two sideways on his secure Anglo-American plinth, was an imbalance between personal statement and material, which, while of obvious concern to Auden, was hardly at the heart of his matter.

MUCH OF WILLIAM PLOMER'S narrative poems[2] can be criticised in the same way. With engaging briskness and efficiency, the air of a man doing a good job, Plomer was nevertheless misled by the ease with which verse can become "light." More so than Auden, Plomer was interested in people. Characters *are* the heart of his matter, though his quite obvious sensationalism is of the macabre sort ("The Flying Bum", "The Dorking Thigh", "Mews Flat Mona" etc.). His last two books moved away from that to a more tender characterisation, just as his earlier poems about his native South Africa must have indicated to his first readers that he might have become a lyrical and descriptive poet on fairly orthodox lines, not a poet of sensational disgruntlement.

[2] *Collected Poems* By WILLIAM PLOMER. Jonathan Cape, £2.95.

And willows growing round the dam
Now may be seen
With all their traceries of twigs
Just hesitating to be green,

Soon to be hung with colonies
All swaying with the leaves
Of pendent wicker love-seats
The pretty loxia weaves

In "Tugela River", he allowed his descriptive writing free verse, pressurised by an historical forecast of revolution in South Africa. Even so, "Tugela River", powerful as it is, lacks the density and mysteriousness of a 20th-century classic. Courting clarity with such dedication, Plomer emerges as a poet like Andrew Young in his emphasis on traditional craftsmanship. Alvarez's remark about Auden is strikingly illustrated in Plomer's intensely personal poem "The Umbrella", where the verse, its purposiveness, and the obligations it forces on the writer trivialise the urgency of the feeling. Outcomes and decisions are specified *too* clearly; he tells a moralised tale to himself, too consciously ordered as a story. Above all, verse can appear outmoded by the psychology of a poem. It can force categorisation on fluid states of mind, simplifying experience. Plomer's kind of verse manoeuvres back to a verse-world, a story-world, which is not unlike the secret country of Young's bucolic

Laurens van der Post
A FAR-OFF PLACE

The sequel to *A Story Like the Wind* which achieved such success when it was published in 1972. Each book, though complete in itself, follows a unique voyage of discovery into a hidden and hitherto unrecorded core of Africa. **£2.75**

David Gadd
THE LOVING FRIENDS
A Portrait of Bloomsbury

An invaluable introduction to that extraordinary group of men and women who, in the first decades of this century, challenged and changed the literary and artistic tastes of their generation. *Illustrated* **£3.00**

George Mackay Brown
HAWKFALL & Other Stories

In this new collection of stories, the author writes about contemporary Orkneymen, but also about the Orkneymen of 500 years ago and those of 4,000 years ago as if they were contemporaries, for the same lineaments are discernible in them. **£2.75**

THE HOGARTH PRESS

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

imagination, and certainly not unconnected to a faithfully English view of life, that queerly middle-class English outlook, "commonsensical" but not rational, crafty, with its relish of eccentricity and the grotesque, cruelly dismissive of those who are beyond the pale, despite frequent professions of a liberal humanity.

It may be a mistake to see something so programmatic in Plomer's poems, but the level of life he appears to have opted for is represented by those who inhabit "The Bungalows." The secret country has its counterpart in the secret suburb. These "semi-isolationists", the cabbage their emblem, are seen by Plomer as thankfully unambitious, thankfully contented with all that is ever likely to be granted them. Their attitudes to those who do not live in "unassuming bungalows" is not mentioned, which is characteristic of a political poem which does not realise it is a political poem. Recently, Lord Hailsham has been asserting the right of the middle and professional classes to survive, as if realistic threats had been made against their very lives instead of the excluding order they support. Art has its own version of Hailsham's attitude, and Plomer's "The Bungalows" ends with an anthem to such political and national eccentricity.

> *The commonplace needs no defence,*
> *Dullness is in the critic's eyes,*
> *Without a licence life evolves*
> *From some dim phase its own surprise:*
>
> *Under these yellow-twinkling elms,*
> *Behind these hedges trimly shorn,*
> *As in a stable once, so here*
> *It may be born, it may be born.*

Anything is possible, I suppose; even such a precious piece of unlikelihood. Remarkably, Plomer did not consider such hymns to propriety out of sorts with the convincing anger he could assemble on South African subjects. There is a similar antithesis in Plomer's work between South Africa and England as between Scotland and England in Young's. English verse, as a technique eliciting thought, produces allocutions in a style which asserts some of the most negative of English traits. Verse, if too consciously emphasised, looks like an inconvenient Victorian institution, like the first public libraries; or an irritating piece of legislation on the statute book, resisting repeal. Fortunately, even a poet like Larkin does not allow it to override everything else. Plomer, too, was able, especially in his later poems, to write in freer forms; and it is in such examples of Plomer's sort of care and attention to language that English habits can be found—contemporary and traditional at the same time—which one hopes will be perpetuated in poetry.

Stewart Alsop
STAY OF EXECUTION

'For the gallantry of his fight alone, he deserves to be spared many years yet; and if he is not, he will have left an admirable testament behind.' *Bernard Levin, Observer*

'A splendid book, in which his interest in and his involvement with what was happening to him gradually drained the experience itself of much of its horror . . . the whole book is an extraordinarily graceful leave-taking.' *Alan Ryan, New Society*

Illustrated, £3.00

Tom Cullen
MAUNDY GREGORY
PURVEYOR OF HONOURS

'Biographies of rogues always make good reading, and Maundy Gregory was the prince of English rogues in the twentieth century. . . . Tom Cullen has done him proud. We wait eagerly for his next book.' *A. J. P. Taylor, Observer*

'This is a remarkable book about a character remarkable by any reckoning. . . . It is the product of patient and painstaking research . . . it makes compulsive reading.' *Birmingham Post*

Illustrated, £3.00

Edward Sackville West
A FLAME IN SUNLIGHT
THE LIFE AND WORK OF THOMAS DE QUINCEY

A new edition with an introduction and notes by Professor John E. Jordan.
Illustrated, £4.00

BODLEY HEAD

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

VERSE IS STILL a preoccupation of some of the most talented of younger poets. John Fuller, for instance, persists with verse as if it was a hobby. He chases stanzas as Nabokov does butterflies. His *Epistles to Several Persons*[3] is written in a stanza known to him as Burns's, known to experts as "Standard Habbie", named for the hero of Sir Robert Semphill's "The Piper of Kilbarchan," written about 1630, though Alexander Scott had used the same verse in a less rumbustious manner before 1590.

Comparison with Burns is out of the question. Anyone familiar with Burns's use of the verse will be struck by Fuller's insipid transformation of what, in Burns, contains some of the liveliest language ever written, forceful, genial, scathing, vulgar, and gratulatory as the subject demanded. Fuller's competence is certainly of a high level, though at times the clarity and power of the stanza is cruelly revealing. To James Fenton, another poet faithful to light iambic verse, he writes,

> *Much of the Left we can ignore*
> *(Sheer anarchy I don't adore).*
> *The trendy educate the poor*
> *In greed and fear. . . .*

where, apart from the hasty moral contempt—as trendy as what it tries to oppose—a word like "adore" is itself enough to indicate the politely laconic lack of substance which verse instead of mind tends to encourage. What we are reading is *verse*, a dose of cleverness. Towards the end of the poem Fuller writes,

> *Some day I'll join you in the street*
> *Where suffering and truth must meet:*
> *It isn't easy to feel effete*
> *This side of anguish,*
> *When those who can't choose what to eat*
> *Don't speak our language. . . .*

and the unfortunate effect of the verse is that he just doesn't mean it. Re-reading the lines, however, makes it clear that honest turmoil, guilt, self-effacement, doubts, are being squandered for the sake of a style that not only converts the ostensible form of verse-letter into thematic failures, but which lends serious subjects an ease, a sense of being amenable to prompt decisions, which is assuredly not the case.

In three of the five *Epistles* (the word itself is verse), Fuller ruminates on politics with his mind far from made up, though the decisive style pretends otherwise. Writing to a friend who like Fuller owns a rural retreat—though grander than Fuller's—he says,

> *Aren't we fakers*
> *Pacing about our fenced-off acres?*
> *Aren't we the economic* Quakers
> *In a cold war*
> *Between the strikers and strike-breakers?*
> *What are we for?*
>
> *A rustic view in Coed-y-Brenin?*
> *A waste to keep a cow or hen in?*
> *What about all the jobless men in*
> *The National Parks?*
> *(I make no reference to* Lenin
> *Or* Karl Marx.)
>
> *The unemployed are twelve per cent*
> *In* Blaenau *where the rain squalls dent*
> *A century's slag, a broken tent*
> *Of splintered slate.*
> *I wonder where the profits went,*
> *And who to hate.*

Wonderings—Fuller, bemused, has tapped a core of political resentments in the wrong metre. It sounds, to my ear, like Mozart's Clarinet Concerto played on a referee's whistle. Like Young, and like Plomer, he is drawn towards a specifically imagined Englishness, sufficiently expansive in its liberal attitudes to include rich and poor, capitalist and socialist, owner and tenant, under the one tolerant umbrella. Is it possible?

Epistles to Several Persons contains many examples of Fuller's political discomfort. He appears guilty of his circumstances and education. They seem to have put him in a position from which he can recognise his own ambivalent outlook on left-wing politics with a certain amount of anxiety. On the whole this is an honest response to contemporary conditions. However, a writing of deeper imaginative turbulence would have appeared more in the mainstream of contemporary poetry than the 18th-century verse-form which Fuller has preferred.

PETE MORGAN[4] USES traditional English verse—nursery doggerel some of the time, verveful free rhythm at others—to give his cryptic allegorical or surreal poems an air of the well-

[3] *Epistles to Several Persons* By JOHN FULLER. Secker & Warburg, £1.75, paper £1.00.
[4] *The Grey Mare Being the Better Steed.* By PETE MORGAN. Secker & Warburg, £2.10, paper £1.00.

AN AMERICAN TRILOGY

Lines On The Death Of A Fisherman

Three Jews in a Tub

Dreamship

Three novels by J. Inchardi
$10 each novel, post free.

Sirius Books, P.O. Box 177,
Freeport, Maine, USA 04032.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

brought-up-child's revenge on society. Morgan's poems are *pour épater le bourgeois* and, as such, familiar, and limited. Many of the poems are immediately likeable. A few, like "The Red Monkey Poems", are impenetrable; but at least he's had the faith of his imagination to run the risk of obscurity. To what extent this really is risk-running these days is debatable.

Unlike most of the poets associated with poems-for-performance, Morgan has the obsessive subject-matter usually associated with those who write for the page. Once a soldier, his own choice, Morgan rejects violence with the sensibility of one soiled by it, which, as one born in 1939, is the revelation in the rejection he shares with his generation—Tony Harrison, for instance, or, slightly older, George MacBeth. In "Sillysuit", the gesture is convincing, unlike in "Why I Stroke the Cat", where, without the restraint of nursery rhyme *cum* pop formality, his writing sprawls, awkward in both shape and sentiment.

Other poems are as closely formed on a crazy sense of humour—as in "The Next Object Is"—as others are on ingenious narratives. But despite the moral contempt of many of the poems, or his obsession with violence, and everything else it is necessary to be against, Morgan does appear to be directing his talents at subjects insufficiently weighty. There is the *appearance* of big subjects being handled, but too much is drowned in noise, in gestures, in stylistic gimmickry. Not enough proves itself to have been worked out of experience. There are too many dwarfs, witches, allegorical horses, demons and magicians among the properties of his imagination, though in poems like "Wall", and the sequence "I See You on My Arm", he's preferred austerity. Plain words suit Morgan.

In Morgan's case, despite the corroded nursery rhythms that make him appear an anarchic schoolboy, the distancing of the poet from verse has gone too far. The safely inventive form of loosely iambic lines does seem the most useful technique for a poet who still wants to say something without strenuously recommending himself to any of the fragmented camps loyal to this or that imported or traditional belief of how poetry ought to be written. Richard Poirier's remarks in *The Performing Self* sum up a generally held point of view which also has some status as truth: "Literature has only one responsibility—to be compelled and compelling about its own inventions. It can do this without paying strict attention to alternative inventions co-existing under the titles of history, life, reality, or politics."

THE PROBLEM now appears to be how far "a willing suspension of disbelief" can be taken at times when society contains so many disturbances and crises. Poetry like John Fuller's in his *Epistles* which does actively engage our own political beliefs, let alone our notions of how contemporary poetry ought or ought not to be written, proves that the traditional means of poetry—verse-form, metre, etc.—no longer have quite the power to suspend beliefs as perhaps they once had when the content of the poetry is controversial.

Through a Graveyard

Examining the graves
we read the names and dates
and then forget them.
This hallowed ground is disarranged:
the head-stones tilt; our words
echo indistinctly on
the abbey walls, light grey
in the evening sun. The angle
may afford some relaxation.

We all together say a root
has moved a tomb,
an observation that gives way
to talk about the branching paths
that wander in and out
the stones. The other visitors have been
as indiscriminate as us.

David Day

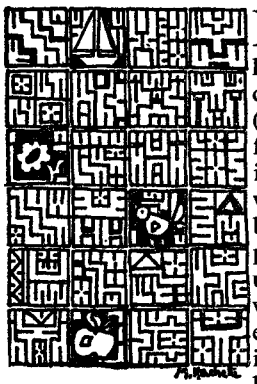
PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

AUTHORS & CRITICS

A Last Controversial Word

The New Inflation

By E. J. Mishan



PROFESSOR JOHN VAIZEY'S airy complaisance in his response to my article on "The New Inflation" (ENCOUNTER, May) makes for engaging reading, but it is not the stuff with which one can fuel a debate. Bent on restoring perspective, he must tell us in his most civilised way that there are worse evils in this world than inflation. True, but surely his choice of the word "tiresome" to describe today's inflation is a trifle mannered—at least it appears to be when one considers the resources involved in keeping pace with an inflation running at current rates: the paper work involved, the strain and aggravation of having continually to re-adjust to new prices, the industrial unrest from heightened sensitivity to pay differentials, and the social injustice suffered by fixed income groups and savers. Whether he judges an inflation that becomes the agent of social dissolution to be more than just tiresome is uncertain. For in his philosophic way he perceives possible meanings and merits in the term social dissolution—insights which are undoubtedly a great comfort to us in these troubled times.

I confess to having enjoyed his mildly satiric remarks on measures to deflate expectations and to invoke patriotism in the fight against inflation —though I must also confess at the same time that they struck me as being rather pointless in this context since they have no bearing on anybody's proposals for damping inflation. As for his brief comments on patriotism, if we ignore his rather personal interpretation of the outbreak of the First World War, they serve to remind us, unnecessarily perhaps, that good institutions can be misused and ideals (even those "high ideals" of the EEC) exploited for unworthy purposes—a reflection, however, that is not decisive in their historical appraisal, nor relevant apparently to the debate on inflation.

Mr Nigel Lawson's contribution to the debate is more substantial. Though I tend to ignore the *ad hominem* in exchanges of this sort, I cannot forbear to let him know how refreshing I found his description of me as "ascetic" and "puritan" after the tedium of continually being dubbed a shameless "élitist" intent on preserving his privileges against encroachment by the Gadarene swine. And just as this amiable characterisation is a wee bit out, so also is his assessment of my broad position on this question of economic growth.

Of course, Mr Lawson avails himself of poetic licence, when he writes that I suffer from "a profound conviction" that "everyone else . . . is 'obsessed' with the monomaniac pursuit of economic growth." What I actually suffer from is the belief that the growth gospel is still enshrined in the ideology of the three major political parties in Britain, and is unquestioned by the main political parties or régimes in nearly all other countries. But it is also my belief that a growing number of personalities and ordinary people are beginning to be increasingly sceptical about economic growth, and that some are even alarmed about the consequences of its continuance. Anti-growth is not only in high fashion but, supported by conservationist, ecological, and environmental organisations, it has begun to have a modicum of political influence, particularly in the United States, where a number of State legislatures have been persuaded to resist industrial expansion and the incursion of tourists.

Let me put it on record also that although I continue to have misgivings about the future that technology is shaping for us I am not at all, contrary to Lawson's belief, "in reality objecting to change." Nor do I regard my "most bitter denunciation . . . of the proliferation of the motor car" (in my *Costs of Economic Growth*) as an example of this perversity. Is it too trite to observe that an objection to change *per se* is just as absurd as an attitude that invariably "welcomes change", or at least innovative change, just because it *is* change? Though we may believe that we are powerless to resist the advance of technology, such a belief does not preclude our making judgments about its impact on our lives, or the impact of a particular piece of technology on social well-being. And it is one of the sad facts of life that, once technology has spawned the motor car and once commercial interests have spent billions in promoting its use, and in persuading society over time to create an environment subservient to its use, zero economic growth alone will not (as Lawson observes) save us from its depredations.

SO MUCH BY WAY of prolegomena. Let me now respond briefly to three minor criticisms

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of my inflation thesis before turning my attention to the big bone of contention between us.

First, I agree that I did not discuss the inflationary consequences of economic growth in my 1967 book, the reason being simply that I did not foresee them at the time. As I indicated in my article, I would, at that time, have subscribed to the orthodox economic view favouring demand-pull theories, and I would have sought to check inflation through monetary and fiscal controls.

As for his not knowing of "any self-respecting social scientists" having "hard empirical evidence" to support my hypothesis, it should occasion no wonder, if only because I have just formulated it. Like him, I am only speculating on the causes of the new inflation. And though, while on this aspect, I have some qualms about blighting his innocent picture of the activities of these "self-respecting social scientists", I cannot resist the temptation to confide to the reader that the empirical evidence for any of a large number of post-War economic theories of inflation (indeed, for most economic theories) is exceedingly shaky—a fact he can easily confirm by a glance through an excellent popular survey of some of the recent economic literature by Professor Parkin in the *Westminster Bank Review* for May, 1974. In fact there are so many data on the subject, so many methods of refining them, and so many ways a hypothesis can be set up, that with determination and ingenuity, almost any inflation hypothesis can be made consistent with some of the data, and any hypothesis so established can be, and is likely to be, refuted a few months later.

Finally, my argument *(a)*, that representative democracy weakens the government's resistance to trade union demands, is not inconsistent with my later allegation *(b)*, that British postwar governments have persistently ignored popular feeling on a number of crucial issues. In pursuit of their common economic aims—such as faster economic growth, increased exports, high employment levels and industrial peace—each of the major political parties seeks to convince the electorate that its particular policies are different from, and more effective than, those of the others. Since each political party elects to be judged on its record in realising these common aims, it is to that extent highly sensitive to public opinion. On other issues, those on which there is broad agreement between political parties—the abolition of capital punishment, immigration, metrication, and, until recently, the Common Market, theatre "permissiveness" and the *Concorde*—majority opinion in the country can be flouted with impunity, especially where, on such issues, the parties can count on the open or tacit support of the media. Concerning the latter phenomenon, my complaint is *not* (as Lawson alleges) simply that "the mass electorate is not heeded enough." My complaint is that Parliament, and for that matter the Established Enlightenment generally, in their impatience to *lead* the nation into the Future, feel no obligation to first persuade the electorate of the superiority, or at least social desirability, of their chosen policies. From these grounds of complaint one cannot infer that (as Lawson suggests) I am "inclined to exalt the views of the People" whenever I happen to share them. And, I might add, the charge of *hubris* is not diminished when the particular measures for which successive governments had no mandate were such as to destroy the nation's sense of identity, and to help free the citizen from any patriotic impulse or incumbrance in their desperate and misguided search for greater economic efficiency.

IT REMAINS FOR ME to come to grips with Mr Lawson's main argument. As I understand him, he accepts union militancy today as a causal factor in the inflation and agrees with me that if full employment policies and the welfare state are to be maintained, the existing style of free collective bargaining in Britain will have to be modified. He seems to concede, albeit grudgingly, that the post-War addiction of journalists and governments to making announcements of economic growth prospects and targets, and the habitual recourse of the latter to price controls and fair-share schemes, has had some effect on the rise in the frequency and magnitude of recent wage claims; also that in today's democracies the money supply itself has become virtually "politicised." Mr Lawson is adamant, however, in denying any causal links between inflation and economic growth, and apparently believes that I am just being bloody-minded in attributing any inflationary influence to economic growth.

I certainly accept his distinction between *(a)* the existing militancy of organised labour and *(b)* its explanation in terms of economic growth. His subsequent reflection on this distinction, that it raises, "the very real practical operational question of whether the second link (the explanation of trade-union behaviour in terms of the growth cult) . . . matters, even if it is true" is also of interest. Let me respond to it before addressing myself to his doubts about the validity of the *(b)* link.

To a historian seeking to interpret events, the validity of the *(b)* link is obviously a matter of importance. But it matters also to practical men of affairs. For even though we believe that over the immediate future growth will continue to be one of the primary aims of economic policy (which is certainly plausible enough), and our

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

concern is limited to feasible remedies, explanations of recent labour militancy in terms of factors other than *(b)* might well call for remedies other than legislation designed to restrict the power of the unions. If, for example, it were believed that their recent surge of aggressiveness arose simply from a perceived reduction in their real standards, the result of an increase in the cost of imported foods and fuels, a policy of carefully calculated excise subsidies whenever the income terms of trade turned against Britain would be enough to placate the unions. If, instead, the aggressiveness could be traced to a resentment at the existing inequalities of income and wealth, radical fiscal policies designed to reduce them would suffice.

Incidentally, Mr Lawson's rejection of the latter explanation on the grounds simply that the statistical evidence shows "a sharp movement toward a more equal distribution of income and wealth" is unsophisticated. I go along with his statement that each union wishes to increase differentials, rather than reduce them, so far as its own position is at issue—just as in the affluent society everybody wants to be *relatively* better off. But these collectively unrealisable aspirations—which surely call for some historical explanation since they are comparatively recent, and can be regarded as "rational" only within a particular ethos—are not inconsistent with a passionate invocation of the ideals of social justice by all groups who believe their earnings to be below the national average (or even below that of only the top percentile).

Turning now to his allegation of the superfluity of the economic growth link, let me first make it plain that whenever I rail against economic growth I use the latter term to include both the cult and the technology. Concentrating first on the cult, my proposition is that sustained economic growth requires and is fostered by the spirit of discontent ("Enough does not suffice").

Mr Lawson, I gather, would be satisfied to attribute this roving discontent to the "capitalist ethic" alone, which ethic preceded the "industrial revolution." As I indicated in my article, however, so long as the capitalist ethic inspired only the capitalist classes it could be counted on to generate economic progress given the appropriate legal framework.

But the gradual permeation of this "capitalist ethic"—this invasion of the acquisitive spirit, and of the restless spirit of envy and discontent—into all strata of society is the critical historical factor that makes for increased social instability in all countries. It is, then, this persuasive spread, this world epidemic of the "capitalist ethic" (and the consequent growing absorption of every family, group, and nation, in ways and means of improving its real, and relative material position) that is the phenomenon I am attributing to economic growth.

Thus, although growthmen never tire of assuring us that only with more economic growth can the poor be made better off without the rich being made worse off—or the rest of us made worse off, which is even more unthinkable—it is this universal rising tide of expectations that looks as if it may yet swamp us. For it does not abate when the statistics show that the real standards of the poor have risen, nor even when they show that nearly all classes of society have bettered their material condition. As advanced economies become wealthier, and the bulk of the population is adequately housed, fed, and clothed, the continuing flow of invidious statistical comparisons acts to transmute greed into envy and envy into resentment—which unholy emotions today are regarded as the very pith of legitimate aspiration.

CONSIDER NOW the relevance of the technological aspects to my thesis, in particular the growth in the size of industrial plant over the century, the growth in specialisation and interdependence, and the rapid spread of communications. These developments have, I argued, increased the power of organised labour and its awareness of that power. Without them strikes, or threats to strike, would have remained localised, and the national scale of industrial action that today can menace a modern and highly interdependent economy, made the more vulnerable by its vast conurbations (themselves the product of rapid economic growth), and can challenge the authority of elected governments, would be scarcely conceivable.

Technical innovations also include those made since the war in statistical methods and, thanks to the computer revolution, in the rapid organisation and processing of data. A result of these advances is that the public has become inundated with a continuous flow of information bearing on the details of the country's week-to-week and month-to-month economic performance, on the changing distribution of income and wealth, on international and domestic pay differentials, and so on. This sort of information, and the prominence given to it by the media, is clearly not such as to inculcate a spirit of contentment among the mass of working people. As I remarked, the routine dissemination of such information, plus instant and nation-wide reports of the successes reaped by organised defiance, blackmail, and intransigence (to say nothing of a decade or more of a variety of income policies and fair-wage criteria), has culminated in a growing hypersensitivity of all employees to their changing position in the pay structure.

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Again, as Mr Lawson himself observes, rapid technological change also entails sharp changes in demand and in productivity, and, therefore, also, in pay differentials which owing to the developments I have mentioned attract immediate public attention and impart an inflationary fillip to the economy through the mechanism described in my article.

Mr Lawson might find my position a little more acceptable if I end by adding a sentence. Seen in a world context, economic growth, or more precisely the growth of expectations and technology, is a contributory agent to this new and more virulent form of inflation we are experiencing. It is not sufficient: it cannot, for instance, be part of an explanation of the milder inflation taking place in the Eastern bloc of countries. It can apply only in countries which have representative democracies and free trade unions.[1] But in countries such as Britain where such institutions have existed for nearly a century, economic growth can be regarded today as the critical factor that has been omitted from orthodox inflation theories.

True, we have enjoyed or suffered from economic growth for at least two centuries. Why then did this new type of inflation not occur earlier? Partly because, as Marx said, quantitative changes lead to qualitative changes. It takes time, that is, for the pressure to build up. The economies of plant size, the build-up of urban populations, the technology of communications, all had to reach a critical stage before the power of organised labour could be made effective on a national scale.

THERE ARE, OF COURSE, other factors at work that can retard or accelerate the event. Even if the technological conditions had been favourable earlier, the prolonged depression of the inter-War years acted to emasculate the power of the labour unions.

But beside the technological conditions there are the psychological ones. As the industrial world struggled back to "normalcy" in the 1950s some years had to pass before the new gospel of sustained economic growth was universally acclaimed, and the revolution of expectations it engendered, assisted as it was everywhere by a sharpening awareness of domestic and international income-differentials, had produced the necessary psychology. Some time had to pass before the growing economic opportunism, often disguised as radicalism, had swept away all sense of communal obligation. It remained only for some chance combination of events—a rise in the world prices of foodstuffs and fuels, coupled with maladroit economic policies—to act as catalyst.

[1] I find Mr Lawson's remark, that I have "nothing whatever to say about the constraint of universal suffrage," very curious, coming, as it does, a little after he himself quotes me as saying: "In a liberal democratic society, no political party wants to be associated by the electorate with continued industrial unrest or prolonged inconvenience (especially if an election is in the offing). . . . "

Returning from Brigg

The first slow miles out of Lincolnshire—
Flat fields, hedges, a million peas to the acre
And propane guns to frighten the pigeons,
Ditches as clogged as old men's veins:

Staring fixedly to parse the landscape—
Fruitful world made by photo-synthesis
For whom long white coats are working
To appease a native hunger or a thesis.

But one long turning onward, and there,
Incredulous and incredible, a dozen hares
Sitting on their back legs presenting paws
And staring at our train as at fire—

I count them as we pass; they do not move
But stare ahead. Partridges break from a hedge:
I am in Eden before the deluge,
I could not live in their world of love.

Peter Porter

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

LETTERS

Knossos Mysteries

THE FIELD OF MINOAN STUDIES will certainly be enlivened, if not enlightened, by Professor Wunderlich's theory about the necropolitan function of the Cretan palaces [Gerhard Prause, "The Mystery of Knossos", ENCOUNTER, May]. It has all the enchantment of a Shakespeare-Bacon cipher.

The absence of defence-works, if an argument against human occupation, logically demands the existence of fortifications elsewhere, presumably round the royal dwellings. Where are they? Such things have millennial survival-value.

Where are the royal dwellings themselves? It is no answer to say that the houses of primitive chieftains return to their parent earth. Imperial palaces do not. Akhenaten's reign was short and disastrous; his successor endeavoured to obliterate his memory; but we still know where he lived. Egyptians and Etruscans aimed at furnishing the dead with the amenities they had enjoyed in life, and plentiful traces survive of the places where they did so. Yet we are to suppose that the line of Minos, kings whose folk-memory was still potent in Thucydides' day, chose commanding sites for their sepulchres (where they stored their administrative records!) and lived themselves on the vulnerable coasts.

Crete is seismic. Gypsum, besides its rich aesthetic possibilities, is patchable when it cracks, and light if it falls down. Extra interior walls mean smaller and sometimes unlit rooms, but support a building better. Child-burials under a floor are readily explainable as human sacrifices to the chthonic powers for the structure's safety, a practise widespread throughout the ancient world.

Why should it be expected that, in a palace, gypsum floors should show heavy wear? If we know anything about the Minoans, it is that they were small, slender, lightweight people. They lived with refinement, and went barefoot indoors. Presumably they kept their feet well-washed and their floors clean; even carpets have a long life under such conditions. In an embalming-factory, subject to the traffic of artisans bearing heavy objects, the wear ought to be much heavier. And since gypsum is permeable, why did not these activities leave it extensively stained?

The grave-robbers, here postulated, must be the tidiest-minded in human history. Instead of leaving plundered sarcophagi where they broke them, they took away all the pieces (except for the odd complete one which looks just like a bath), and placed them on a special dump, like Boy Scouts in camp. On the other hand, such a dump is just what would result from clearing an ancient burial-ground to make room for a new construction, the grave-goods going to the workmen on the site.

Especially fascinating is the idea that the unfunctional fragility of weapons and vessels proves them to be funerary offerings. Fake weapons for decoration have been sold in modern Europe for nearly two centuries. By this kind of reasoning, what will a 30th-century Wunderlich make of all the unfunctional, decorated, fragile vessels, the relics of well-found drawing-rooms and parlours, which lie under London bomb-sites awaiting his deductive powers?

MARY RENAULT

c/o Allen Lane Ltd.,
London

The New Inflation

I WOULD NOT disagree with Professor Mishan's analysis of the domestic causes of inflation in Britain, including such factors as trade-union power in a technically dependent society; the welfare state; declining national morale; rising material expectations among the masses; and the weakness and irresolution of governments faced with a problem they do not understand and have not the nerve to cope with. But if a miracle occurred and these problems were mastered by strong governments leading a united people, the overseas causes of inflation would remain. Professor Mishan gave three paragraphs of his article to them; but their importance is greater than that.

So far as there was any conscious thought and foresight behind Britain's history of Industrialisation it was based on the assumption that raw materials would always be available for the factories, and that when the people flocked into these factories and no longer grew their food other nations would send them food for manufactures. This might have been tenable when Britain was the workshop of the world but not when industrialisation has spread to most countries and is everywhere intensifying, spreading, and becoming more efficient and voracious in its needs. Obviously demand for raw materials and fuels will increase, and prices too since demand will outpace supply. Suppose other economic miracles started up —say in China—or that Russia's demand for imported materials became as big as America's. Successful industry with booming production is everywhere an inflationary trap but especially for over-industrialised countries like Britain and Japan whose factories must close down and people starve if other nations cannot or will not sell them the imports they need. Price rises will of course worsen if political causes are added to economic ones, as in Middle East oil.

Then there is the rising cost of food. The warnings of two World Wars are ignored and Britain still imports nearly half its basic foodstuffs though the farming community believes we could grow all our own. Portents are already clear. If population projections come true and world population doubles in 35 years a world food-shortage will bring crisis everywhere. What then is going to happen to the over-industrialised countries with their millions herded into cities and their lands largely covered with a casing of concrete? They will be searching the world's food markets for food at any price.

N. A. SMITH

Bournemouth

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I HAVE SOME SYMPATHY with Mr Smith's view of the vulnerability of the affluent society, and also with his belief that the terms of trade are likely to turn against the industrial nations. The argument is that the diminishing returns to increased world outputs of foods, fuels, and metals will not be offset by technical innovation. But although the higher price of oil and foodstuffs undoubtedly played a role in aggravating the inflation in 1973, I am not yet convinced that their prices will continue to rise over the immediate future.

London E. J. MISHAN

Anyone for Melancholy ?

Another View from America — By ANDREW M. GREELEY

JOSEPH EPSTEIN'S MELANCHOLY chronicle of America ["Anyone for Paranoia?", ENCOUNTER, May] is an exercise in the ancient and honourable journalistic art of projection: one sees one's own mood in the whole of society and then writes about oneself under the pretext that one is describing the society. Since one sees things so clearly, there is absolutely no need to be encumbered by empirical evidence. Mr Epstein certainly is within his rights to engage in such an exercise, but I think the readers of ENCOUNTER might be interested in an alternative view of the present state of America that is less melancholy but, alas, encumbered by all kinds of empirical evidence.

In recent months there has been considerable discussion of whether the American Republic has come upon such hard times that serious questions must be raised as to its ability to perdure. My own view is that the durability of the American Republic has been proved in recent years in a fashion which would have caused great rejoicing among those who put it together. This combination of optimism and patriotism (tempered, I hope, by realism) is unfashionable nowadays, and I shall be accused of wanting to celebrate America.

Here are a number of different arguments which suggest that the Republic is in trouble.

1. The Argument from Analogy. We are in the position England was in 1930, that the Weimar Republic was in 1932, and Rome in 431. They all fell apart; we will too. But this is not 430 or 1930, and we are not Germany or England or Rome. We do not have a major economic crisis; we have not been swept by the Black Death; barbarian tribes are not crossing the Rhine in destructive hordes. We are the richest and most prosperous country in the world, and are likely to remain so. Our boundaries are secure. Our stomachs are full. Our armed might would blast any invading tribes into non-existence. This is not to say that we have no troubles, merely that extinction from the outside or from economic collapse does not seem likely. Indeed, all our economic troubles are minor compared to the Great Depression, which in retrospect we survived with flying colours.

ANDREW M. GREELEY *is the Director of the Centre for the Study of American Pluralism at the National Opinion Research Center in Chicago.*

2. The Argument from Defeat. We lost in Viet Nam, we have lost face with the Arabs, we have lost our national pride. These blows to our national spirit cannot be endured without grave reaction in the populace. But this argument assumes that the population gives a damn about having lost a nasty war in Southeast Asia, or about being humiliated by the Arabs, or that our national pride depends on beating Hanoi. There is no evidence to support such assumptions. On the contrary, the populace is glad to have the war over with; and they really don't care much about the cavorting of the Arabs. National pride is a great non-issue.

3. The Argument of Loss-of-Confidence. Assassinations, war, inflation, now Watergate, have all delivered a body-blow to our self-confidence. Americans are no longer able to have confidence in the ability of their institutions to cope with the problems we must face. This argument assumes that we have not had assassinations, war, economic problems, or corruption before. It even assumes that we have not had crooked presidents before. The American people are much less readily shocked by the incompetence and dishonesty of elected leaders than are the media and the élites. We have had a run of bad luck. Or maybe not. As Professor Arthur Mann remarked recently: "Last year we got rid of the fools; this year we are getting rid of the knaves. . . ."

4. The Absence of Leadership Argument. Who will lead us out of the wilderness? No one. Thus, we are doomed to remain there. Of course, this argument assumes that we are in a wilderness, which I don't concede. It also assumes that a republic needs a great man whenever it is faced with problems. Great men are nice to have around (sometimes), but it is more likely that we need an honest and intelligent man who is an able national politician. The last one of those we had was killed in Dallas.

5. The Hard-Decisions Argument. There are many hard decisions ahead for America (for us alone?). The American people are not ready for such decisions. Well, maybe they are and maybe they aren't; I guess we won't know until we get there. But to date, we seem to have done all right on hard decisions: like pouring vast sums of money into saving Europe after the Second World War, Korea, Viet Nam (in and out), racial integration. Anyone who thinks that hard decisions are not part of the entire history of the country doesn't know much about that history. Whether the decisions will be any harder or the response any less adequate remains to be seen. The evi-

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dence seems to run in the opposite direction from what the pessimists would have us believe.

6. The Failure of Values argument. This takes two forms. The first argues that we no longer believe in the things that made us "great" (right-wing argument); and the other asserts that the things that made us "great" are responsible for Watergate (greed, ambition, etc). This is the left-wing argument. Both arguments endow history with an organic and deterministic propensity that I consider mythological. What Americans believe in now and during the past is a matter for research (sociological in the first instance, historical in the second). Most of the evidence I have seen makes me doubt whether there has been any great change—save perhaps among the élites, which have always questioned what others believe in and is one of the things élites are for. As for Watergate and the Oil Crisis having been caused by "the American way of life," one must concede that they do represent facets of the American character that are not attractive. So did Teapot Dome and every other scandal in a long and colourful history of scandals.

But does the present crisis in England reflect the failure of English values? Did the Russian way of life cause the much worse Russian pollution problem? Or are the problems we face common to all modern countries, and are they more likely to be solved by patience, intelligence, and ingenuity than by despair? Besides, value systems are pluralistic, and there are other and more attractive aspects of American culture than those generated by California's Orange County *petit-bourgeoisie*.

Reply to Greeley

IF AN ECUMENICAL ANALOGUE is allowable, Father Andrew Greeley's letter is reminiscent of nothing so much as of the bright yeshiva boy who runs through the streets of his village crying out, "I've got an answer! I've got an answer! Does anybody have a question?" Apart from the fact that there is nothing very original or even carefully formulated about his list of arguments suggesting that America is in trouble, I suppose that there is some utility in having all these clichés set down conveniently in one place.

Rather than citing all the Decline-and-Fall arguments, however, it might have been more useful if Father Greeley had confronted my own, much more modest notion—which holds that, having lived so long under a crisis atmosphere, the quality of American life in its quotidian aspects has become less good than it has been. A point over which Father Greeley and I might usefully have argued is whether the national mood of paranoia I wrote about in my essay exists or not. But this Father Greeley appears uninterested in discussing. Is he awaiting the arrival of sociological data on the subject? Meanwhile, empirical-minded though he would have us believe he is, he ignores all that is in my essay and goes on to make a number of (unsupported) assertions of his own. His letter provides an instance of a man who, taking the high ground, is left alone on the mountain top arguing with himself.

JOSEPH EPSTEIN

Evanston,
Illinois

The New Larkin

IN HIS REVIEW of Philip Larkin's *High Windows* ("Wolves of Memory", *Encounter*, June), while comparing Larkin with Montale, Clive James advances three reasons for such a comparison. Firstly, that in Italy the reading public "is accustomed to cooling its heels for even longer" than Larkin, since (even though older) Montale, like Larkin, has produced only four collections. Secondly, that Larkin "would almost certainly hate visiting Italy as much as Montale is known to have hated visiting England." And thirdly, that there isn't "the slightest point in trying to translate either man into the other's language", in so far as "each incarnates the principle that the poetry is the part you can't translate."

Now, whatever the justification for such a comparison—and Mr James is himself not very sure about it, since he admits that "except in purity there is just no way that they (Montale and Larkin) connect"—may I suggest that, so far as Montale is concerned, none of the three reasons is valid. Montale has published five, not four books to date: *Ossi di seppia* (1925), *Le occasioni* (1939), *La bufera e altro* (1956), *Satura* (1971) and *Diario del '71 e del '72* (1973). Secondly, there is no evidence to suggest that Montale hated visiting England. He visited England more than once. Among the poems and prose pieces inspired by his visits to England and Scotland there is nothing to indicate that he disliked being there. Thirdly, as to Montale's incarnating "the principle that the poetry is the part you can't translate", the fact is that Montale has himself translated Shakespeare and Marlowe into Italian as well as poems from Blake, Hardy, Yeats, Pound, Eliot and Dylan Thomas.

And lastly, when Mr James asserts that there is not the slightest point in trying to translate either Montale or Larkin into the other's language, may I, as one of Montale's translators, point out that when my translation of *Xenia* was published, far from demonstrating, the impossibility of translating Montale, it received the approval of the late C. Day-Lewis, Robert Graves and F. R. Leavis.

G. SINGH

Queen's University,
Belfast

I HAVE HAD ALL too many occasions to note Professor Singh's entrepreneurial interest in Montale and have always marvelled at the intensity of self-satisfaction displayed. On the number of collections, it rather depends on what you call a collection, but I am ready to stand corrected. On whether Montale enjoyed visiting England, there is equally little in his prose pieces (which I read without obtaining Professor Singh's permission) to indicate that he *liked* being here. It was common talk, when Montale was in Cambridge to receive his honorary degree, that the standard of British creature comforts appalled him. This, however, might merely have been a rare instance of interesting academic gossip: perhaps I was foolish to listen to it, and should be willing to stand corrected again.

But not in a million years will I stand corrected on the point about translation. It is not the time to kick

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

C. Day Lewis, but I see no reason for failing to deal irreverently with Professor Singh's other referees. Robert Graves's opinion on what constitutes a good translation from Montale is as valuable as his opinion on what constitutes a good translation from Omar Khayyam. As for Dr Leavis, his views on Montale are inextricably mixed up with some dreary campaign he is waging against Eliot—a campaign which seems to involve discrediting Valéry. If I were Professor Singh I should draw the appropriate conclusions from Dr Leavis's insistence that the judgments he makes are not literary.

If Professor Singh thinks translating Montale is possible then he has missed Montale's meaning. Translations, when they are useful, are done on the assumption that the outcome can at best be nothing more than an edifying failure. I have looked into Professor Singh's translations of Montale. They are as flat as a tack. The Italians, as Professor Singh is doubtless aware, have a relevant saying: *Traduttore traditore.*

CLIVE JAMES

Cambridge

Zaehner's "Evil"

R. C. ZAEHNER [ENCOUNTER, April] presents the mass-murderer Charles Manson as a main witness for the prosecution against the younger generation's preoccupation with Eastern religions and ways of life. There may be many things to say against this revival of mysticism—but Charles Manson's case is not a moral, it is a medical one. Every ward has its prophets and religious maniacs alongside with its great statesmen and inventors, and it is a fact that a psychosis may very well be connected with great intellectual and verbal cunning.

Unstable minds are always in danger of falling prey to strong emotional appeals, but I think there are sources nearer at hand to explain our moral troubles than those poor remnants of an old Eastern culture, which now for a lot of people have to fill the emptiness of their lives. Where did we, representing the old European culture, go wrong, leaving the young outside in the cold?

KARL BRODERSEN

Oslo

THE QUESTION of where we went wrong seems to me to admit of several answers one of which I have suggested in my book *Our Savage God* (shortly to be published by Collins) which is intended to demonstrate how the Western equivalent of Oriental mysticism was effectively nipped in the bud by Aristotle.

Another very short answer might be: since the Reformation the old-fashioned vice of avarice has been divinised as thrift; and it is the nature of youth not to be avaricious/thrifty.

R. C. ZAEHNER

All Souls College,
Oxford

Tagore's Tiger

MR A. E. G. HAWKINS asks why Tagore's tiger has spots instead of stripes. I asked this same question the first time the Bengali poem was read to me, and as this was my point of entry, so to speak, into the Bengali language, I queried a number of Bengali friends and scholars about it thereafter. Their answer was that *bágh* might mean leopard as well as tiger, but tiger is the colloquial meaning; the feminine, *bághini*, is always "tigress", and adjectival uses always have connotations of *tiger*-like behaviour. *Chákā* always means round, circular; *dág* always means spot or mark or blemish.

Tagore had lived in the villages and certainly knew a tiger when he saw one. His purpose in his primers was to provide an easily-remembered metrical setting for the Bengali alphabet. If there are any nonsense-meanings, a Bengali child, to whom a tiger was a fact of everyday life, would assimilate them as imaginatively as an English child assimilates the idea that the man on his way to St Ives did not really have seven wives.

MARY M. LAGO

University of Missouri,
Columbia

Man Ashamed

ERICH HELLER'S beautiful article "Man Ashamed" [ENCOUNTER, February] brings to my mind the counsel of the rabbinic sage, Rabbi Simeon ben Eleazar (in *Pirke Aboth*, or *Sayings of the Fathers*, a collection of sayings and religious-ethical teachings of the sages of post-Biblical Judaism from the third century BCE to the third century CE, IV 23):

> "... Do not appease thy fellow in the hour of his anger, and comfort him not in the hour when his dead lies before him, and question him not in the hour of his vow, and strive not to see him in the hour of his disgrace."

Here too, it seems to me, is awareness of the need to protect from others the "inwardness" (as Heller says) and the sanctity of feeling.

RUTH S. WOLOZIN

Concord, Mass.

17 Writers

THE CONFERENCE on Security and Cooperation in Europe [CSCE], which is currently taking place in Geneva, offers a great opportunity for concrete improvements in human and cultural contacts in Europe and for bringing to a much higher level all aspects of social and intellectual communication among the 35 countries attending the Conference.

It is our firm belief that no lasting security in Europe may be achieved without due respect being paid, by all governments, to the right of individuals, and without more intensive, unrestricted exchanges in the sphere of culture, information and human contacts.

The undersigned writers express their full support of the unanimously accepted "Final Recommendations" of the Helsinki CSCE consultations which provide, among others, for:

—improved contacts between people, including travel for personal or professional reasons;
—promotion of meetings of young people;

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

—facilitation of freer and wider dissemination of information;
—promotion of fuller mutual knowledge of and access to achievements in literature, art and other fields of cultural activity.

The undersigned writers appeal to governments represented at the CSCE to codify these resolutions in the form of specific and detailed agreements, and to ensure their practical application in all the participating countries.

THERE IS NO QUESTION of interference in the internal affairs of a state, but rather of general acceptance of the principle that security and cooperation in Europe require respect of human rights and lowering of barriers which have for so long artificially divided this continent.

For these reasons, too, the undersigned call for continuous implementation of the said resolutions as well as their periodical review and appraisal. They also pledge their cooperation with, and contributions to the European Magazine, proposed by the United Kingdom delegation, designed to promote the exchange of cultural and other information.

HEINRICH BÖLL
FRIEDRICH DÜRRENMATT
PIERRE EMMANUEL
GÜNTER GRASS
GRAHAM GREENE
EUGENE IONESCO
LESZEK KOLAKOWSKI
SIEGFRIED LENZ
MARY MCCARTHY
NORMAN MAILER
ARTHUR MILLER
HAROLD PINTER
DENIS DE ROUGEMONT
JOHN UPDIKE
VERCORS
PER WÄSTBERG
ANGUS WILSON

Conclusion

HAVING READ with great interest the discussions, by Messrs George Watson [ENCOUNTER, December 1973] and Joel Carmichael [March] of support for the Bolsheviki, first by the Kaiser's military and then by the British intellectuals, I come to the conclusion: from the sealed train to the trained seals.

HENRY PACHTER

City College,
New York City

AUTHORS

Alexander Theroux is Briggs-Copeland Lecturer on English at Harvard. His first novel, *Three Wogs*, was published by Chatto & Windus and Wildwood House last year. . . .

Jonathan Power is a free-lance journalist, broadcaster and film-maker, specialising in race relations and economic affairs, and contributes regularly to *The Times* and *New Society*. He has acted as consultant for the World Council of Churches and the United Nations Conference on Urban Settlements which will be held in Vancouver in 1976. His article on Malcolm X appeared in the September 1973 issue of ENCOUNTER.

Constantine FitzGibbon has written numerous works of fiction, biography and history, including *The Life of Dylan Thomas* (1963), *A Concise History of Germany* (1972), and *The Life and Times of Eamon de Valera* (1973). Macmillan published last year his latest novel, *In the Bunker*. . . .

Robert Nisbet is Professor of History and Sociology at the University of Arizona. His previous articles for ENCOUNTER include "The Nemesis of Authority" (August 1972) and "Has Futurology a Future?" (November, 1971). "Rousseau and Equality" is the latest in a succession of writings on Rousseau that began with "Rousseau and Totalitarianism" (*Journal of Politics*, May 1943) and has continued through *The Quest for Community* (1953) and *Tradition and Revolt* (1968) among other works. . . .

Max Beloff was Gladstone Professor of Government and Public Administration, University of Oxford, from 1957–74; he is now Principal of the University College at Buckingham. . . .

John Weightman, ENCOUNTER's film and theatre critic, is Professor of French at Westfield College, University of London. His book of essays, *The Concept of the Avant-Garde*, was published by Alcove Press and Library Press in 1973. . . .

Friedhelm Kemna is a correspondent for *Die Welt*, Hamburg. . . .

Golo Mann's contributions to ENCOUNTER include "Hitler" (June 1974), "W. H. Auden" (January 1974), "The History Lesson" (August 1972) and "Napoleon" (December 1969). . . .

P. N. Furbank's most recent book is *Reflections on the Word "Image"* (Secker & Warburg, 1970). He is now writing the official biography of E. M. Forster. . . .

Laurence Lerner is Professor of English at the University of Sussex and author, among other works, of *The Uses of Nostalgia* (Chatto & Windus, 1972). His latest book of poems, *A.R.T.H.U.R.: The Life and Opinions of a Digital Computer*, will be published later this year by Harvester Press. . . .

Roy Fuller was Professor of Poetry, University of Oxford, from 1968–73; his Oxford lectures on poetry, *Owls and Artificers*, were published by Library Press and by André Deutsch, who also brought out his most recent book of poems, *Tiny Tears*. . . .

Janet Adam Smith was Literary Editor of the *New Statesman* from 1952–60. Her works include a biography of John Buchan (1965) and the revised edition, published earlier this year, of *The Faber Book of Comic Verse*. . . .

Douglas Dunn is Fellow in Creative Writing, University of Hull. His third collection of poems, *Love or Nothing*, will be published by Faber this autumn. . . .

E. J. Mishan is Reader in Economics at the London School of Economics and Professor of Economics at the American University, Washington, D.C. . . .

ENCOUNTER Magazine is published in London by Encounter Ltd. (in association with the Open Court Publishing Co.), 59 St Martin's Lane, London WC2N 4JS

PRINTED IN GREAT BRITAIN BY WATMOUGHS LIMITED, IDLE, BRADFORD; AND LONDON

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Strasbourg

TWIT WIT: A crisp exchange of insults between two members of the British peerage enlivened and delighted the European Parliament in Strasbourg yesterday. The cause of the exchange was the problems resulting from the 10 million migrant workers now in the Community.

Baroness Elles, a Conservative life peer, argued that the decline in the birthrate in the Community since 1964 could only result in increased dependence on the migrant labour force. "If this decline in the birthrate goes on it could be said we are contributing to a form of European genocide."

Lord O'Hagan, an Independent, while expressing "awestruck admiration" for Lady Elles's capabilities generally, added: "On this occasion she has made just a little bit of a twit of herself."

The French, German, Dutch and other interpreters dredged up approximations for "twit" as Lady Elles told Lord O'Hagan "Your schoolboy vocabulary is about on a level with the capacity for reasoning you display on this."

DAILY TELEGRAPH

London

AGGRO: *There were undercurrents of hostility at the reception on Monday night for James Baldwin, the American writer, given by Michael Joseph, his publishers. The centre-piece of the party, at a hot Knightsbridge restaurant, was a blazing argument between Baldwin and an assertive reporter. There was an additional nasty incident earlier when Baldwin did unspeakable things with a greasy egg-roll.*

I did not catch all of the argument between Baldwin and the reporter, but it seemed to be about the reporter's description of Baldwin as a spokesman for America's black people. Baldwin, small and neat in a black velvet suit with interesting objects round his neck, said he was a spokesman for nobody but himself.

THE TIMES

Westminster

ALL IS FLEX: But is it, or are they, or is he *flexible?* That it would seem, is rapidly becoming a key word in British politics. The test of whether something is right or wrong, Right or Left, wise or foolish, even whether it is relevant or irrelevant (to mention a recent fad) is giving way to the question of whether it is *flexible*.

Yesterday in the House of Commons everything was in a state of flex.

DAILY MAIL

Moscow

DONKEY'S WORK: *Soviet sculptor Ernst Neizvestny disclosed today that he has received official approval after a two-year delay for his memorial to the late Kremlin leader Nikita Khrushchev. Work on the 8-foot-high memorial commissioned by Mr. Khrushchev's family after his death in September, 1971, had been stalled by official discussions on Mr. Neizvestny's design. The sculptor declined comment on the government's approval but an informed source said the decision was made "at the highest level."*

The information said the Khrushchev memorial will be erected—probably before the Sept. 11 third anniversary of Mr Khrushchev's death—at Moscow's Novodevichye Cemetery. The memorial will be made of granite and marble, with a bronze bust of the former premier.

Mr. Neizvestny, 48, was involved in a famous confrontation with Mr. Khrushchev over modern art at a Moscow exhibition in 1963. Mr Khrushchev said, "A donkey with his tail could do better work." Thereafter, Mr. Neizvestny was denied state commissions for eight years.

INTERNATIONAL HERALD TRIBUNE

Berlin

BARDOLOGY: Who is still interested in Shakespeare's "King Lear" as an old piece of English history? What is still British about it is the climate, the stormy weather on the heath. But now that we have Giorgio Strehler's famous 4½-hour Milan production of "King Lear" here with us in Berlin, one must ask if one can take it when it comes neither in English nor in our mother tongue, but wrapped in strange words and an even stranger mentality.

Strehler's Lear is very Italian. The whole evening is enough to make one dizzy. Its style is supposed to be connected with Beckett's French-Irish "End Game", and its theory with Jan Kott's Polish interpretation of the Marxist-Existentialist Bard. Most of the time one appears to be wandering through a TV-replay of an Apollo Moon Expedition. As for the sounds one heard, it was pure grand opera, alla' italiana, of course, with Shakespeare sung as if he were Giuseppe Verdi.

TAGESPIEGEL/WELT

Paris

NODDY BY A NOD: *The work of Enid Blyton, the British children's writer, who died in 1968, has been translated into more languages than that of Karl Marx, the latest survey of translations published here by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization* (UNESCO) *reveals. Her work was translated into 165 languages against 148 for Marx.*

The Russians' effort put Lenin into the lead, with 381 translations compared with 215 of the Bible. The most translated contemporary British writers are Agatha Christie, 144 translations in 1971, and Graham Greene with 33.

THE TIMES

London

PERMISSIVE: I read [writes Peter G. Jones of St John's College, Cambridge] with concern the following, which appeared in your leader on the marital problems of MPs:

"An obvious palliative would be to let MPs . . . pair much more frequently than now".

DAILY TELEGRAPH

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Keith Douglas 1920-1944

A Biography

Desmond Graham

'Keith Douglas was a poet of quite staggering resources. . . . His death robbed English poetry of one of the most exciting talents to appear since Auden. Desmond Graham's book is continuously readable and would, I imagine, rivet the attention even of the reader with no special interest in contemporary poetry; for anyone who does profess such an interest it is, and will be for a long time to come, obligatory reading.' – Vernon Scannell in the *New Statesman* £5·50

Eight Contemporary Poets

Calvin Bedient

Charles Tomlinson, Donald Davie, R. S. Thomas, Stevie Smith, Thomas Kinsella, Ted Hughes, Philip Larkin, and W. S. Graham– eight poets who are very different in many ways – are alike in the seriousness of their achievement. In close, creative analyses of their poems Calvin Bedient shows the importance of their individual contributions to the British poetic tradition. £4

Collected Poems

Austin Clarke

Austin Clarke was the most important Irish literary figure since Yeats, and his work fully exploits the qualities which endow Irish poetry in English with its unique essence. His themes derive from a wide spectrum of the Irish experience and are universal in appeal; this book collects all his published poetry. £5·90 (available also in three paperback volumes £1·75 each)

My Uncle John

Edward Stephens's Life of J. M. Synge

Edited by Andrew Carpenter

Ned Stephens, a gifted observer, grew up close to Synge and his family, and spent summers with them in County Wicklow. His depiction of their day-to-day existence throws interesting light on Anglo-Irish family life at the turn of the century, and makes a rich background for his admiring portrait of his famous Uncle John. Illustrated £3·75

Thomas Mann

The Uses of Tradition

T. J. Reed

This study traces the literary and philosophical sources on which Thomas Mann consciously drew, and the social and cultural traditions of Germany which moulded his work although he grew increasingly critical of them. This development, which made of Mann the most clear-sighted as well as the most artistically subtle imaginative historian of modern Germany, is pursued through analyses of all his major works and the phases of his politics. Illustrated £8·50

What is Ecology?

D. F. Owen

Ecology is concerned with exponential growth, the control of population size, and the structure of communities and ecosystems. The author explains its principles and how it works, and goes on to show how it affects us and our supplies of food, oil, and other raw materials. His book will guide its readers to think as ecologists and to make sensible predictions about the future. Illustrated £2·75 paper covers 95p

Oxford

PRODUCED 2005 BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED